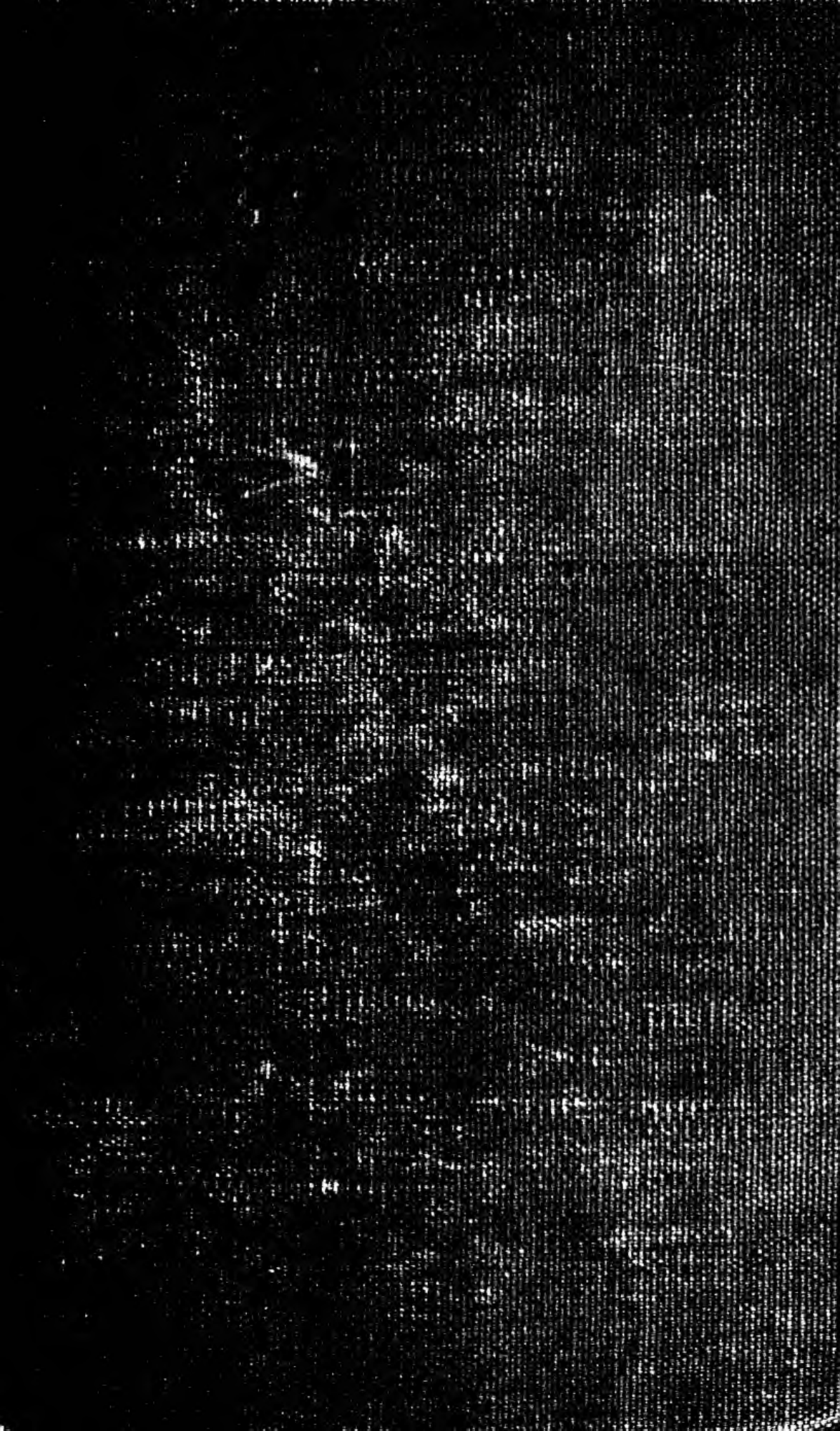

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SIR WALTER SCOTT STUDIED IN EIGHT NOVELS

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STUDIED IN

EIGHT NOVELS

BY THE

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"HISTORY IN SCOTT'S NOVELS," "SHAKESPEARE STUDIED IN THREE PLAYS," "BRITISH WRITERS ON CLASSIC LANDS," ETC., ETC.

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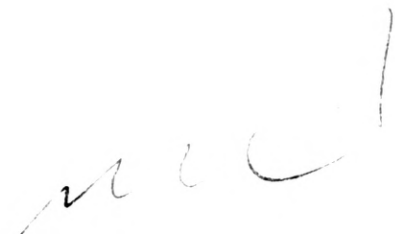
Prefatory Note

THESE Studies, except that on "The Surgeon's Daughter," which is new, are here revised and enlarged in the hope that they may be useful to general readers.

A. S. G. CANNING.



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"Hold the mirror up to Nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure." —SHAKESPEARE.

"The proper study of mankind is man."

POPE'S *Essay on Man.*

"It is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity."—BACON'S *Essay on Truth.*

GUY MANNERING

SIR WALTER SCOTT STUDIED IN EIGHT NOVELS

CHAPTER I

GUY MANNERING

THIS most interesting story, unlike its predecessor, "Waverley," has nothing to do with religious or political history. Its main interest depends on fictitious characters and incidents, some of which, according to Scott's notes and references, have a slight foundation in fact. Although there are two heroes and two heroines, none of them are very interesting or attractive. Thus Henry Bertram, the chief hero, placed in a most romantic situation, and both amiable and intelligent, is by no means a very remarkable

or interesting personage. The other, Charles Hazlewood, is still less so, and very seldom mentioned. Julia Mannering, although clever and sprightly in her letters, takes little part in the story, while Lucy Bertram, like her lover Hazlewood, is seldom introduced.

The chief interest of the book depends on the sayings and doings of the four original and remarkable characters, Meg Merrilies the gipsy, Dominie Sampson the tutor, Dirk Hatteraick the Dutch smuggler, and Dandie Dinmont, the Liddesdale farmer whose celebrated terrier dogs are still represented by favoured descendants. These are all masterpieces in their different ways, perfectly consistent and natural throughout.[1]

The gipsy, Meg Merrilies, though treated and viewed with contempt, harshness, and

[1] Scott himself tells us that he took more interest in his mercenaries and moss-troopers, outlaws, gipsies, and beggars, than he did in the fine ladies and gentlemen under a cloud whom he adopted as heroines and heroes.—Hutton on Scott, chap. xi.

suspicion, to which her unfortunate, degraded, and scattered race has always been exposed, even in Christian lands, conceives and preserves a most extraordinary attachment to the Bertram family, from whom, indeed, she never received much personal benefit, but on whose lands she and some of her tribe were for a time allowed to live in peace. Her intense devotion to the Bertrams, though natural in an old servant or tenant, seems rather unlikely in Meg's situation; for gipsies have rarely been in a position to show any feeling of the sort; but Scott has taken her character from a certain Jean Gordon, whom he mentions in notes, yet who was placed in a very different situation from Meg Merrilies. Scott's object probably was to show in this woman, though living among desperate associates, and if not a thief herself, certainly the associate of thieves and vagabonds, despised and ill-used by every one, yet a person capable of the deepest gratitude to any who showed her the least kindness. Her devotion to the ruined Bertrams, and her efforts to restore the young

heir to his ancestral rights, cause her chief misfortunes, sufferings, and death; yet she clings to her purpose with indomitable resolution, and her exertions are successful at last, though at the cost of her life, as she is shot by Dirk Hatteraick, once the ally of her gipsy gang. Her ill-usage, even by the comparatively respectable, who consider her a dangerous vagrant, and by her own associates, who suspect her of betraying them, are alike powerfully described, exciting the reader's interest in Meg Merrilies to the highest point. Her last words when hearing the cheers of the Ellangowan tenantry greeting the young heir, whose rightful restoration had been both the object of her life and the cause of her death, are perhaps the most affecting and pathetic in the whole of this novel:

"When I was in life I was the mad, randy gipsy that had been scourged and banished, that had begged from door to door, and been hounded like a stray tike from parish to parish—wha wad have minded *her* tale? But now I am a dying

woman, and my words will not fall to the ground any more than the earth will cover my blood."

Then, hearing the exulting shouts of the Ellangowan tenantry, she utters her last words:

"Dinna ye hear, dinna ye hear? He's owned, he's owned! I lived but for this."[1]

Dominie Abel Sampson, the eccentric, worthy tutor to young Bertram, though a most amusing oddity, constantly doing foolish things, awkward, shy, and often unconscious of all around him, is yet an excellent, and in some respects even a noble character.

An amusing scene occurs between the Dominie and the old gipsy woman, Meg Merrilies.[2] She tries to entrust him with a message to Colonel Mannering, while Sampson, distrusting her, and tired after a long walk, refuses to hear her, till Meg, seeing his fatigued state, gives him some soup, made up, as she owns, out of game, &c., caught by some of her gipsy gang. The Dominie, when re-

[1] Chap. lv. [2] Chap. xlvi.

freshed, consents to take her message, though every now and then abusing her in scraps of Latin, of which luckily she knows nothing. She asks

"So ye hae eat nothing a' day?"

"Nothing," answered the Dominie.

Then, shocked at the doubtful character of Meg, adds:

"*Sceleratissima*—that is, gudewife."

"So ye like the meat?"

"Yea," answered the Dominie, "and I give thee thanks — *sceleratissima* — which means — Mrs. Margaret."

"Now ye maun take a dram!"

"I will," quoth Sampson, "*conjuro te* — that is, I thank you heartily," for he thought to himself, in for a penny in for a pound; and he fairly drank the witch's health in a cupful of brandy. When he had put this cope-stone upon Meg's good cheer, he felt as he said, "mightily elevated and afraid of no evil which could befall him."

When Sampson returns to Colonel Mannering's house, he is met by the worthy house-

keeper, Mrs. Allen, who exclaims, remonstrating:

"What's this o't now, Mr. Sampson, this is waur than ever! ye'll really do yerself an injury wi' these lang fasts—naething sae hurtful to the stomach, Mr. Sampson—if ye would put some peppermint drops in your pocket, or let Barnes cut ye a sandwich."

"Avoid thee," quoth the Dominie, his mind still running on his interview with Meg Merrilies, and making for the dining-parlour.

"Na, ye needna gang in there—the cloth's been removed an hour syne, and the Colonel's at his wine; but just step into my room, I have a nice steak that the cook will do in a moment."

"*Exorciso te*," said Sampson, "that is, I have dined."

"Dined! it's impossible—wha can ye hae dined wi', you that gangs out nae gate?"

"With Beelzebub, I believe," said the minister.

This reply of the bewildered Dominie is too much for Mrs. Allen, who evidently disbelieves in the fiend's hospitality.

"Na, then he's bewitched for certain," said the housekeeper, letting go her hold; "he's bewitched, or he's daft, and ony way the Colonel maun just guide him his ain gate. Wae's me! Hech, sirs! It's a sair thing to see learning bring folk to this."

Sampson's absurdities and failures, kind heart, deep gratitude, and utter unselfishness, are not unlike the great hero of Cervantes, and, indeed, the expressions of Dr. Johnson about Don Quixote may be applied, without impropriety, to Dominie Sampson also.

"However Cervantes embarrasses Don Quixote with absurd distresses, he gives him so much sense and virtue as may preserve our esteem, wherever he is, or whatever he does; he is made by matchless dexterity commonly ridiculous but never contemptible."[1]

Had Dr. Johnson lived to read and enjoy "Guy Mannering," he would probably have thought that, in describing the Dominie, Scott had shown a "dexterity" equally "matchless" to the celebrated Spanish writer. In fact, the character and conduct of Dominie Sampson are usually "ridiculous" both in words and deeds, but "never contemptible" in either motive or spirit. Scott thus sketches part of the poor Dominie's early career:

[1] "Lives of the Poets": "Life of Butler."

In progress of time Abel Sampson, probationer of divinity, was admitted to the privileges of a preacher. But alas! partly from his own bashfulness, partly owing to a strong and obvious disposition to risibility which pervaded the congregation upon his first attempt, he became totally incapable of proceeding in his intended discourse, gasped, grinned hideously, rolled his eyes till the congregation thought them flying out of his head, shut the Bible, stumbled down the pulpit stairs, trampling upon the old women who generally take their station there, and was ever after designated as a stickit minister.

Scott thus describes a man utterly deficient in those qualities of sagacity, prudence, and commonsense usually essential to worldly prosperity, and generally so requisite to obtain the esteem and respect of others. Sampson is destitute of these qualities, and yet the wisest man of honour and principle who ever read a book cannot study his character without some admiration for it, and of which he would own that many far superior to the poor Dominie in sense and shrewdness were quite unworthy.

An affecting instance of the Dominie's goodness of heart is when his patron's orphan

daughter, Lucy Bertram, is ruined through her father's misfortunes, and when her lawyer, Mr. MacMorlan, is paying off the family debts [1]; Sampson exclaims, when refusing some money offered him in behalf of his former pupil, now left poor and almost friendless:

"I that have ate of her father's loaf and drank of his cup for twenty years and more—to think that I am going to leave her in distress and dolour! No—Miss Lucy, you need never think it. You would not consent to put forth your father's poor dog, and would you use me waur than a messan? No, Miss Lucy, while I live I will not separate from you. I'll be no burden, I have thought how to prevent that. But as Ruth said unto Naomi, 'Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to depart from thee; for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou dwellest, I will dwell; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God. Where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death do part me and thee.'" During this speech, the longest Dominie Sampson was ever known to utter, the affectionate creature's eyes streamed with tears, and neither Lucy nor MacMorlan could refrain

[1] Chap. xv.

from sympathising with this unexpected burst of feeling and attachment.

This story abounds with striking scenes and situations, and is divided into two parts. The first leaves Mannering a young unmarried man, and the Laird of Ellangowan with Dominie Sampson, his companion, alike mourning for the death of Mrs. Bertram, who leaves an only daughter, and describes the strange disappearance of the young heir, suspected to have been stolen by gipsies and smugglers, who in this part of the Scottish coast were in league to defeat or evade the laws. The old Laird Godfrey Bertram of Ellangowan is described throughout as an easy-going, not very wise, but kindly country squire, delighted when he is made a J.P. He expresses his pleasure in such an absurd way that probably Scott may have heard of a similar case, as he would hardly have invented it. He tells his humble, trusty companion, Dominie Sampson, to read aloud his new commission, and at the first formal words,

"The King has been pleased to appoint"—"Pleased!" he exclaimed in a transport of gratitude,—"honest gentleman! I'm sure he cannot be better pleased than I am." [1]

The good-natured Laird of Ellangowan, however, is induced soon after his obtaining the Commission of the Peace to commence carrying out

his magisterial reform at the expense of various established and superannuated pickers and stealers who had been his neighbours for half a century . . . and by the influence of the beadle's rod, caused the lame to walk, the blind to see and the palsied to labour. He detected poachers, black-fishers, orchard-breakers and pigeon-shooters; had the applause of the bench for his reward and the public credit of an active magistrate.

Scott in the following passage shows, as he often does, that spirit of thoughtful humanity which so distinguished both his character and writings:

All this good had its rateable proportion of evil. Even an admitted nuisance of ancient standing should not be abated without some caution. . . .

[1] Chap. vi.

The long-remembered beggar who for twenty years had made his regular rounds within the neighbourhood, received rather as a humble friend than as an object of charity, was sent to the neighbouring workhouse. The decrepit dame who travelled round the parish upon a hand-barrow, circulating from house to house like a bad shilling which every one is in haste to pass to his neighbour; she who used to call for her bearers as loud or louder than a traveller demands post-horses, even she shared the same disastrous fate. The "daft Jock," who, half knave, half idiot, had been the sport of each succeeding race of village children for a good part of a century, was remitted to the county bridewell, where, secluded from free air and sunshine, the only advantages he was capable of enjoying, he pined and died in the course of six months. [1]

The description of the despairing father and tutor, vainly seeking their lost son and pupil, is remarkably affecting and natural. So far the tale seems like a tragedy, but in the second part, after a supposed interval of seventeen years, great changes have taken place.

Mannering, now a Colonel and a widower, with an only daughter, returns to Scotland

[1] Chap. vi.

from India. He arrives in time to witness the poor laird's death and the sale of his estate, both hastened, if not caused, by the knavery of a lawyer, named Glossin, whom he had trusted with the management of his affairs. This man purchases the Ellangowan property, and the unfortunate laird reproaches him just before his death with being the chief cause of his ruin. Mannering generously gives a home to the desolate orphan, Miss Bertram, with his own daughter, Julia, who is in love with a certain Lieutenant Brown, afterwards proved to be the young heir of Ellangowan. This young man follows the Mannerings to Scotland from India. He remembers a little of his past history, and fortunately much resembling his late father, is soon recognised by Dominie Sampson, who, with Miss Bertram, shares Mannering's hospitality, and also by the old gipsy, Meg Merrilies. But a more practical and useful friend appears in the shrewd, honest lawyer, Pleydell, who well remembers the whole story of the child's disappearance, and has the worst opinion of Glossin, whose fortune had been

chiefly made by the ruin of his late employer and patron. Young Bertram, therefore, soon finds himself well supported by judicious as well as sincere friends in recovering his patrimony, which could not have been sold had his existence been known for certain. Glossin, however, is apprised by the outlawed smuggler, Dirk Hatteraick, his former instrument in kidnapping the young heir, of Bertram's return to Scotland, and these worthies now consult how to get rid of their young victim, while the faithful Meg Merrilies endeavours to thwart their machinations by betraying Hatteraick to Bertram and Dinmont, who arrest him while lurking in a cave. This scene of Hatteraick's arrest, who mortally wounds Meg Merrilies before his capture, is remarkably dramatic and exciting; yet notwithstanding many affecting incidents, this story is on the whole a very cheerful one. For the gloomy scenes of Glossin's murder by Hatteraick in the jail and the latter's suicide are immediately after varied by the general rejoicing at the recovery of the Ellangowan property by the rightful heir,

the joy of the worthy Dominie, Pleydell, and Dinmont, and the final happiness of all the most amiable personages in the book.

The confused joy of the faithful Dominie, formerly Bertram's tutor, is amusingly shown when, after seventeen years' absence, the boy he remembers is now a tall young soldier returned from India and finally recognised. The Dominie, like some other forgetful, dreamy people, can hardly understand the flight of time with its inevitable changes. When enumerating all young Bertram's friends, he eagerly exclaims, after the first greetings are over :

"There is the great Colonel Mannering from the Eastern Indies, a man of war from his birth upwards, but who is not the less a man of great erudition, considering his imperfect opportunities ; and there is moreover the great advocate, Mr. Pleydell, who is also a man of great erudition, but who descendeth to trifles unbeseeming thereof ; and there is Mr. Andrew Dinmont, who I do not understand to have possession of much erudition, but who, like the patriarchs of old, is cunning in that which belongeth to flocks and herds. Lastly there is even I myself, whose opportunities of col-

lecting erudition, as they have been greater than those of the aforesaid valuable persons, have not, if it becomes me to speak, been pretermitted by me in so far as my poor faculties have enabled me to profit by them. Of a surety, little Harry, we must speedily resume our studies. I will begin from the foundation—yes, I will reform your education upward from the true knowledge of English grammar, even to that of the Hebrew or Chaldaic tongue." [1]

In this warm congratulation the Dominie aptly, though quaintly, describes the chief characters in this story. Sampson is evidently a great favourite of Scott, who takes apparently real pleasure in making him finally as happy as possible. On the restoration to Bertram of his ancestral estate and castle at Ellangowan a room called Mr. Sampson's apartment is assigned to him near a large library. On seeing this happy arrangement for his future comfort and joy, Sampson resorts to his peculiar expression when astonished or delighted :

" Prodigious, prodigious, pro-di-gious!" shouted the enraptured Dominie.[2]

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[1] Chap. li. [2] Chap. lviii.

The two characters of the gallant Colonel Guy Mannering and the shrewd, honest lawyer Pleydell, are ably contrasted with the bold ruffian Hatteraick, and the knavish lawyer Glossin. Thus, when the two last named are detected and brought to trial, after a long course of successful cunning, Mannering expresses sympathy for Hatteraick and Pleydell for Glossin:

"Yet," said Pleydell, "I am sorry for Glossin."

"Now, I think," said Mannering, "he is the least worthy of pity of the two. The other's a bold fellow, though as hard as flint."

"Very natural, Colonel," said the advocate, "that you should be interested in the ruffian, and I in the knave—that's all professional taste; but I can tell you Glossin would have been a pretty lawyer had he not had such a turn for the roguish part of the profession."

"Scandal would say," observed Mannering, "he might not be the worse lawyer for that."

"Scandal would tell a lie, then," replied Pleydell, "as she usually does. Law's like laudanum—it's much more easy to use it as a quack does, than to learn to apply it like a physician." [1]

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[1] Chap. lvi.

This quaint, witty comparison is the more interesting when it is remembered that Scott himself lived much among Scottish lawyers and had therefore great personal experience. It is Scott's constant habit to describe good and bad men of the same religious profession, political principles, and worldly position, for the sake, doubtless, of the reflections which their comparison naturally suggests to the reader. For it is evidently his paramount object in all his writings to diminish, and, if possible, overcome all feelings of prejudice, except against sin and vice, which he steadily reveals and exposes in all political or religious disguises and in all ranks and positions of life. Yet in this story Glossin and Hatteraick are neither of them totally devoid of conscience or remorse. Indeed, few, if any, among Scott's villains are, and in this respect he is unlike some other great delineators of human character. Glossin is made to wish himself dead, through remorse, even when successful,[1] and Hatteraick, even after committing two

[1] Chap. xxxiv.

murders, protests against being described as having

spent a life without a single virtue.

He immediately exclaims, in moral self-defence :

"Virtue ! I was always faithful to my shipowners ; always accounted for cargo to the last stiver."

Yet these two men are described so naturally, and their crimes are so detestable, that their wretched fate elicits no sympathy. Unlike some writers, who attempt to make criminals attractive and interesting as well as wicked and dangerous, Scott in this respect, like Shakespeare, describes them as they really are, and as the dreadful experience of magistrates and police detectives confirms. According to their knowledge the generality of criminals, without being positive monsters of iniquity, incapable of occasional remorse, are usually unworthy of that sympathy, interest, and compassion which should be reserved for the innocent and unfortunate.

Scott gives a curious and graphic description of the sale of Ellangowan Castle, in which his keen observation and delicate sympathy for distress and misfortune are strikingly displayed :

There is something melancholy in such a scene, even under the most favourable circumstances. The confused state of the furniture, displaced for the convenience of being easily viewed and carried off by the purchasers, is disagreeable to the eye. Those articles which, properly and decently arranged, look creditable and handsome, have then a paltry and wretched appearance ; and the apartments, stripped of all that render them commodious and comfortable, have an aspect of ruin and dilapidation. It is disgusting also to see the scenes of domestic society and seclusion thrown open to the gaze of the curious and the vulgar, to hear their coarse speculations and brutal jests upon the fashions and furniture to which they are unaccustomed,—a frolicsome humour, much cherished by the whisky which in Scotland is always put in circulation on such occasions. [1]

The ruin of the Bertram family and the subsequent recovery of their property are narrated

[1] Chap. xiii.

with amazing skill and power, but the main interest of this story is centred in a few remarkable characters, who, though in subordinate positions to the young heroes and heroines, yet claim and engross the reader's attention from first to last, and are certainly some of the happiest efforts of Sir Walter's genius. These may be considered as almost pure inventions, for though he says that Dominie Sampson and Meg Merrilies were to a slight extent drawn from life, yet so little was evidently known, even to Scott, of their prototypes, that their characters and language, like their course of action in the novel, are chiefly due to the consistency and power of his imagination.

THE ANTIQUARY

CHAPTER II

THE ANTIQUARY

THIS work, as Mr. Shaw observes,[1] is an admirable novel of familiar Scottish life. It is remarked by another admirer of Scott's,[2] that though it has not the historic character of "Waverley," or the varied charm of "Guy Mannering," yet in some scenes and characters it surpasses both its predecessors. It certainly is one of the most cheerful, sensible, and pleasing of his novels, though not so exciting or deeply interesting as many of them. It must be owned, however, that the hero and heroine—Lovel and Miss Isabella Wardour—the last especially, are rather uninteresting, without being failures. There is nothing incon-

[1] "Student's English Literature."

[2] Rev. Mr. Gilfillan's "Life of Scott."

sistent or unnatural in their conduct; but Scott apparently cares little about them himself. They are seldom introduced, and take a very secondary part in the story. The main interest lies in Mr. Oldbuck, the shrewd and worthy Antiquary, the old bedesman, Edie Ochiltree, the melancholy Lord Glenallan, the penitent old crone Elspeth, the German swindler Dousterswivel, and his pettish dupe, Sir Arthur Wardour. This last character, though weak, silly, and irritable, is wonderfully natural from first to last. The sympathy which his misfortunes excite, and the pleasure the reader feels at his relief, are remarkable proofs of Scott's genius, considering poor Sir Arthur's foolish conduct and character.

Edie Ochiltree is certainly one of the most interesting characters in this story, and the scene which, above all, first captivates and engrosses the reader, is the grand description of the sea storm,[1] from the effects of which Sir Arthur, Miss Wardour, and himself have such a narrow escape:

[1] Chap. vii.

It was, indeed, a dreadful evening. The howling of the storm, mingled with the shrieks of the sea-fowl, sounded like the dirge of the three devoted beings who, pent between two of the most magnificent yet most dreadful objects of nature—a raging tide and an insurmountable precipice—toiled along their painful and dangerous path, often lashed by the spray of some giant billow, which threw itself higher on the beach than those which preceded it. They struggled forward, however; but when they arrived at the point from which they ought to have seen the crag, it was no longer visible—the signal of safety was lost among a thousand white breakers, which, dashing upon the point of the promontory, rose in prodigious sheets of snowy foam as high as the mast of a first-rate man-of-war, against the dark brow of the precipice.

The countenance of the old man fell. Isabella gave a faint shriek, and "God have mercy upon us!" which her guide solemnly uttered was piteously echoed by Sir Arthur: "My child! my child!—to die such a death!"

"My father! my dear father!" his daughter exclaimed, clinging to him, "and you, too, who have lost your own life in endeavouring to save ours!"

The weak character of Sir Arthur and the noble courage of Ochiltree are well shown in the following words:

"Good man," said Sir Arthur, "can you think of nothing?—of no help? I'll make you rich—I'll give you a farm—I'll——"

"Our riches will soon be equal," said the beggar, looking out upon the strife of the waters—"they are sae already; for I hae nae land, and you would give your fair bounds and barony for a square yard of earth that would be dry for twal hours."

At this terrible moment, however, assistance appears in the form of Lovel and Oldbuck, so that the Wardours and brave old Edie are, after great risk and difficulty, finally rescued from their impending danger. Scott, as if to relieve himself, after describing this dangerous scene, immediately reverts to Oldbuck's comfortable house. Sir Arthur and his daughter return safe to their own home, while old Edie is offered many a night's shelter from various neighbours who have aided in the rescue. Oldbuck and Lovel return together to Monkbarns, where the Antiquary's reception by his sister, Miss Griselda, is sufficiently amusing. Oldbuck, though often sarcastic and almost rude to her and to his niece, Mary McIntyre, is really much attached to both. He now

reveals his true feelings when asking after his niece; his old sister replies:

"Indeed, brother, amang a' the steery, Maria wadna be guided by me—she set away to the Halket-craig-head—I wonder ye didna see her."

"Eh!—what—what's that you say, sister? Did the girl go out in a night like this to the Halket-head?—Good God, the misery of the night is not ended yet!"

"But ye winna wait, Monkbarns—ye are so imperative and impatient."

"Tittle-tattle, woman," said the impatient and agitated Antiquary, "where is my dear Mary?"

"Just where ye suld be yoursell, Monkbarns—upstairs and in her warm bed."

"I could have sworn it," said Oldbuck, laughing, but obviously much relieved. "I could have sworn it."

But Oldbuck, little knowing what has passed at his house during his visit to the scene of danger, proceeds:

". . . Let Lovel and me have forthwith the relics of the chicken-pie and the reversion of the port."

"The chicken-pie—the port! Ou dear, brother—there was but a wheen banes and scarce a drap o' the wine."

The Antiquary's face became clouded, though he was too well bred to give way in the presence of

a stranger to his displeased surprise . . . but his sister understood these looks of ire. "Ou dear! Monkbarns, what's the use o' making a wark?"

"I make no wark as ye call it, woman."

"But what's the use o' looking so glum and glunch about a pickle banes?"

Then comes the explanation:

"An ye will hae the truth ye maun ken the minister came in—worthy man—sair distressed he was, nae doubt, about your precaurious situation as he ca'd it (for ye ken how weel he's gifted wi' words), and here he would bide till he could hear wi' certainty how the matter was likely to gang wi' ye a'. He said fine things on the duty o' resignation to Providence's will, worthy man, that did he."

Oldbuck replied, catching the same tone, "Worthy man!—he cared not how soon Monkbarns had devolved on an heir-female, I've a notion—and while he was occupied in this Christian office of consolation against impending evil, I reckon that the chicken-pie and my good port disappeared."

"Dear brother, how can ye speak o' sic frivolities when ye have had siccan an escape from the craig?"

"Better than my supper has had from the minister's *craig*, Grizzie—it's all discussed, I suppose?"

"Hout, Monkbarns, ye speak as if there was nae mair meat in the house."[1]

[1] Chap. ix.

Though the storm scene is the most exciting one in the book, among the most amusing are the comic disappointment of Oldbuck in his antiquarian fancies, and the long conversation in Fairport post-office between the roguish postmistress, Mrs. Mailsetter, and her two gossiping friends, Mrs. Heukbane and Mrs. Shortcake. They examine the letters, especially those they suspect are love-letters, when Mrs. Mailsetter exclaims:

"Od, here's another."

"A ship letter!" All rushed to seize it.

"Na, na, leddies," said Mrs. Mailsetter, interfering. "I have had enough o' that wark. Ken ye that Mr. Mailsetter got an unco' rebuke frae the secretary at Edinburgh for a complaint that was made about a letter of Aily Bisset's that ye opened, Mrs. Shortcake?"

"Me opened?" answered the spouse of the chief baker in Fairport; "ye ken yoursell, madam, that it cam open o' free will in my hand. What could I help it?—folk suld seal wi' better wax."

"Weel, I wot that's true too," said Mrs. Mailsetter, who kept a shop of small wares, "and we have got some that I can honestly recommend. . . . But I wad aye be obliging and neighbourly, and I'm no

again your looking at the outside o' a letter neither. See, the seal has an anchor on't—he's done't wi ane of his buttons, I'm thinking."

"Show me, show me," quoth the wives of the chief butcher and chief baker, and threw themselves on the supposed love-letter, like the weird sisters in "Macbeth" upon the pilot's thumb, with curiosity as eager and scarcely less malignant.[1]

Scott may perhaps be too severe in this classification, for surely the peaceful old Scottish gossips, however eager and inquisitive about news, never contemplated doing fatal injury to any one and were, it is to be hoped, incapable of actual criminality.[2]

[1] Chap. xv.

[2] The regret which Shakespeare's witches indicate at their limited powers of doing harm to mortals seems revealed by one of them in her rage against a sailor's wife who had offended her, and whose husband she apparently wished to drown :

"Tho' his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-toss'd.
Look what I have."

The other two witches exclaim :

"Show me, show me,"

It is remarkable that though Scott was himself an antiquary,[1] he rather ridicules Mr. Oldbuck's taste for antiquities by making him often deceived by his own eager imagination or by the cunning of others, despite his usual prudence and shrewdness. In two cases especially, Oldbuck's enthusiastic love for antiquity causes him both loss and ridicule. When he thinks he has found the site of a Roman camp at the time when the general Agricola was said to have invaded or tried to invade Scotland, the eager Antiquary exclaims to his young friend, Mr. Lovel, who partly sympathises with him :

"From this place, now scarce to be distinguished but by its slight elevation and its greener turf from the rest of the fortification, we may suppose Agricola

---

and the third, with triumphant malignity, replies :

"Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come."[2]

[1] Lockhart's "Life of Scott."

[2] Act 1, Scene 3.

to have looked forth on the immense army of Caledonians occupying the declivities of yon opposite hill, the infantry rising rank over rank as the form of ground displayed their array to the best advantage. . . .

. . . See then, Lovel—See . . .
See that huge battle moving from the mountains!
Their gilt coats shine like dragon scales;—their march
Like a rough tumbling storm—See them, and view them,
And then see Rome no more!. . . "

Oldbuck thus continues enthusiastically, allowing his eager fancy to altogether outrun his cool judgment :

"Yes, my dear friend, from this stance it is probable —nay, it is nearly certain, that Julius Agricola beheld what our Beaumont has so admirably described!— From this very Prætorium——"

A voice from behind interrupted his ecstatic description, "Prætorian here, Prætorian there, I mind the bigging o't,"

and the shrewd old Scottish beggar, Edie Ochiltree, formerly a soldier, suddenly appears

and thus explains about the site of this supposed Roman camp, exclaiming:

". . . I just ken this about it, that about twenty years syne, I and a wheen hallenshakers like mysell and the mason-lads . . . just set to wark and built this bit thing here that ye ca' the—the Prætorian, and a' just for a bield at auld Aiken Drum's bridal, and a bit blithe gae-down we had in't some sair rainy weather. . . ."

At this news Lovel glances at the poor surprised, disappointed Antiquary, whose cruel vexation Scott thus describes with an interest which perhaps was partly owing to some former disappointments of his own in vainly trying to recall past times:

. . . Gentle reader, if thou hast ever beheld the visage of a damsel of sixteen whose romance of true love has been blown up by an untimely discovery, or of a child of ten years whose castle of cards has been blown down by a malicious companion, I can safely aver to you that Jonathan Oldbuck of Monkbarns looked neither more wise nor less disconcerted.

Again, chap. xvi. describes Oldbuck tempted by the town clerk of Fairport to allow a water-

course through his land by promising the Antiquary some carved monumental stones in return for the permission :

> They parted mutually satisfied, but the wily clerk had the most reason to exult in the dexterity he had displayed, since the whole proposal of an exchange between the monuments (which the council, in Fairport, had determined to remove as a nuisance, because they encroached three feet upon the public road) and the privilege of conveying the water to the burgh through the estate of Monkbarns was an idea which had originated with himself upon the pressure of the moment.

Oldbuck lives a quiet, retired life with his sister and niece, Miss Griselda Oldbuck and Miss McIntyre, both very different from him in tastes, yet a strong mutual affection exists between the three. Oldbuck had once loved a Miss Neville, who rejected him and privately married the Earl of Glenallan, whose mother, disliking the proposed marriage, and not knowing it had actually taken place, made a false statement that Miss Neville was too nearly related to him to authorise their union by any

Christian Church. Miss Neville, who nearly lost her senses at this revelation, soon after died, apparently by suicide, though this is not very clearly explained, leaving an only child, a son, who was taken abroad by a foreign nurse without the father's knowledge. He was afterwards brought up, or at least supported, by an uncle, who, however, does not tell him his whole history, under the name of Lovel. He falls in love with Miss Wardour, whom he meets in England, and follows her to Scotland, little knowing that the Wardours are near neighbours to his own lawful patrimony of Glenallan Castle. His father, Lord Glenallan, depressed and melancholy ever since his wife's death, has lived for many years alone with his mother in this solitary castle. Soon after the elder Lady Glenallan's death and the subsequent confession of her servant Elspeth, Lovel, who finds a warm friend in Mr. Oldbuck, whose antiquarian tastes he shares, is introduced by him to Lord Glenallan. Both are greatly impressed by Lovel's strong likeness to his unfortunate mother, for whose love these elderly gentlemen had once

been rivals. Lovel knows enough of his past history to confirm the belief and hope of Lord Glenallan that he is his long-lost son. After this change in Lovel's position, it certainly seems that Miss Wardour's coldness to him also changes with great rapidity, and their marriage is announced, though not described.

This pleasant story ends well and happily for all its chief characters, and is on the whole among the most amusing and cheerful of all the Waverley Novels; its incidents and interest are all of a domestic character, and the scene is laid entirely in a retired part of Scotland during a time of profound peace. Perhaps on this account, therefore, this book, as Scott admits in the preface, was not so popular at first as its two predecessors were, but it soon became equally, if not more so, with many readers. This cold reception was, perhaps, owing to its not containing any very exciting scenes or incidents, which at first might produce disappointment, though a more careful examination entirely removed this feeling. The work abounds with admirable pictures of

Scottish life and character, as well as wise and valuable reflections. Among these may be noticed the reply to Miss Wardour's inquiries, when visiting a ruined monastery with a party of friends, why so little was known to posterity about the former inmates of the ancient edifice, when many legends of freebooters and robbers were carefully preserved by tradition among the Scottish peasantry. The sensible answer to this question Scott assigns to Lovel, and it doubtless conveys his own opinion:

"The eras by which the vulgar compute time have always reference to some period of fear and tribulation, and they date by a tempest, an earthquake, or burst of civil commotion. When such are the facts most alive in the memory of the common people, we cannot wonder that the ferocious warrior is remembered, and the peaceful abbots are abandoned to forgetfulness and oblivion."[1]

During this pleasure party, the two "originals," as Scott himself calls Oldbuck and Sir Arthur Wardour, are nearly having a theo-

[1] Chap. xvii.

logical or political dispute, which, however, is prevented by the timely prudence of Miss Wardour. Oldbuck and Sir Arthur are both Protestants, yet the latter is evidently an extreme Tory, if not a Jacobite, while the Antiquary is a decided, though rather a whimsical Liberal. On surveying the ruins of the old Roman Catholic monastery Oldbuck exclaims, with the historic interest of an enthusiastic antiquary :

"There was the retreat of learning in the days of darkness. There reposed the sages who were aweary of the world, and devoted either to that which is to come or to the service of the generations who should follow them in this. I will show you presently the library—see that stretch of wall with square-shafted windows — there it existed, stored, as an old manuscript in my possession assures me, with five thousand volumes. And here I might well take up the lamentation of the learned Leland, who, regretting the downfall of the conventual libraries, exclaims, like Rachel weeping for her children, that if the papal laws, decrees, decretals, clementines . . . had leaped out of our libraries for the accommodation of grocers, candle-makers, soap-sellers and other worldly occupiers, we

might have been therewith contented. But to put our ancient chronicles, our noble histories, our learned commentaries and national muniments to such offices of contempt and subjection, has greatly degraded our nation, and shown ourselves dishonest in the eyes of posterity to the utmost stretch of time—O negligence most unfriendly to our land!"

Here Oldbuck's antiquarian tastes evidently clash with his religious or political principles, and thus the comparatively dull Sir Arthur is able to exclaim with sarcastic truth:

"And O, John Knox, through whose influence and under whose auspices the patriotic task was accomplished!"

The Antiquary, somewhat in the situation of a woodcock caught in his own springe, turned short round and coughed, to excuse a slight blush as he mustered his answer—

"As to the Apostle of the Scottish Reformation——"

But Miss Wardour broke in to interrupt a conversation so dangerous.[1]

The interest of the amusing scene where Lovel and Edie Ochiltree overhear and frighten

[1] Chap. xvii.

Sir Arthur Wardour and Dousterswivel, when hunting for hidden treasure in the evening amid the ruins of St. Ruth's monastery, is rather marred by the provoking though short-lived success of the swindler in duping his unlucky patron.

Dousterswivel set fire to a little pile of chips, and when the flame was at the highest, and lightened with its short-lived glare all the ruins around, the German flung in a handful of perfumes, which produced a strong and pungent odour. The exorcist and his pupil both were so much affected as to cough and sneeze heartily, and as the vapour floated around the pillars of the building and penetrated every crevice, it produced the same effect on the beggar and Lovel.

"Was that an echo?" said the baronet, "or," drawing close to the adept, "can it be the spirit you talked of, ridiculing our attempt upon his hidden treasures?"

"N—n—no," muttered the German, who began to partake of his pupil's terrors. "I hope not."

Here a violent explosion of sneezing confounded the two treasure-seekers.

"Lord have mercy on us!" said the Baronet,

while the German, equally terrified, exclaims in

his own language, "All good ghosts praise the Lord!" [1]

The distress of the Mucklebackits at their son's death, and the remorseful confessions of old Elspeth to Lord Glenallan, succeed each other in a remarkable manner.

Lord Glenallan visits the house of mourning and addresses the old woman, asking her :

"Why was it you so urgently requested to see me! and why did you back your request by sending a token which you knew well I dared not refuse?" As he spoke thus, he took from his purse the ring which Edie Ochiltree had given him at Glenallan House. The sight of this token produced a strange and instantaneous effect upon the old woman. The palsy of fear was immediately added to that of age, and she began instantly to search her pockets with the tremulous and hasty agitation of one who becomes first apprehensive of having lost something of great importance—then, as if convinced of the reality of her fears, she turned to the Earl and demanded, "And how came ye by it then—how came ye by it? I thought I had kept it sae securely —what will the Countess say?"

[1] Chap. xxi.

"You know," said the Earl, "at least you must have heard, that my mother is dead."

"Dead, are ye no imposing on me? has she left a' at last, lands and lordships and lineages?"

"All, all," said the Earl, "as mortals must leave all human vanities."

"I mind now," answered Elspeth, "I heard of it before; but there has been sic distress in our house since, and my memory is sae muckle impaired. But ye are sure your mother, the lady Countess, is gane hame?"

The Earl again assured her that her former mistress was no more.

"Then," said Elspeth, "it shall burden my mind nae langer! When she lived, wha dared to speak what it would hae displeased her to hae had noised abroad? But she's gane—and I will confess all."

As a rule, the changes in fiction are from cheerfulness to melancholy alternately, but in this instance the reader is still sorrowing for poor drowned Steenie Mucklebackit and his afflicted parents, when his interest is swiftly transferred to old Elspeth's revelation of her plot with Lady Glenallan to prevent the marriage of her son, Lord Glenallan, and to murder his infant son. This transition is

effected with great power, and these two scenes, with the death of Elspeth, form almost the only gloomy ones in this otherwise cheerful novel.

Oldbuck and his nephew, Captain McIntyre, with old Edie, call at the old woman's abode, where she is singing scraps of old songs to herself, when Edie reminds her of her former mistress's death, saying :

"So ye canna keep in mind, cummer, that your auld mistress, the Countess Josceline, has been removed ?"

"Removed !" she exclaimed, for that name never failed to produce its usual effect upon her ; "then we maun all follow—a' maun ride when she is in the saddle. Bring my hood and scarf—ye wadna hae me gang in the carriage wi' my lady and my hair in this fashion ?" She raised her shrivelled arms and seemed busied like a woman who puts on her cloak to go abroad, then dropped them slowly and stiffly ; and, the same idea of a journey still floating apparently through her head, she proceeded in a hurried and interrupted manner, "My lady calls us. Bring a candle—the grand staircase is as mirk as a Yule midnight. We are coming, my lady !" With these words she sunk back on the settle, and from thence

sidelong to the floor. Edie ran to support her, but hardly got her in his arms before he said, "It's a' ower—she has passed away even with that last word." [1]

Though poor Sir Arthur Wardour's troubles with his creditors occur at the end of the book, they are rather amusing than sad, directly the happy result is known.

Messrs. Greenhorn & Grinderson, Sir Arthur's creditors, through the roguery of Douster-swivel procure his arrest for debt, when rescue comes by Sir Arthur's son, Captain Wardour, obtaining the requisite money from Lovel, his personal friend. Mr. Greenhorn immediately writes an apologetic letter to the relieved Sir Arthur, in a very different style from a previous one of his partner Grinderson, which was written in a comparatively insulting style. Sir Arthur reads this last letter aloud to his shrewd old friend the Antiquary, who makes the following caustic, but perhaps true, observation upon its contrast to Mr. Grinderson's previous epistle :

[1] Chap. xl.

"Well said, Mr. Gilbert Greenhorn ; I see now there is some use in having two attorneys in one firm. Their movements resemble those of the man and woman in a Dutch baby-house. When it is fair weather with the client, out comes the gentleman partner to fawn like a spaniel ; when it is foul, forth bolts the operative brother to pin like a bull-dog."[1]

The trials of her father might have made the heroine, Miss Wardour, somewhat interesting ; but Scott apparently feels little interest in her himself, so no wonder his readers cannot, for she is in fact perhaps the most unattractive of all his heroines, while the hero, Lovel, though his situation is eminently interesting, is one of the least attractive of his heroes. Even the Highlander, Hector McIntyre, Oldbuck's nephew, though hot-tempered and passionate, is almost equally interesting to the reader, and apparently to the author also ; but Jonathan Oldbuck, the Antiquary, is himself the real hero of this story. Although caustic and censorious to all about him, often sarcastic, but never ill-natured, his kindness and gener-

[1] Chap. xliii.

osity on all occasions of real distress remind the reader of Dr. Samuel Johnson, whom, indeed, in many respects he somewhat resembles, and of whom it was said "he had nothing of the bear about him but his skin."

Thus when Mr. Oldbuck finds and expels his niece, Miss McIntyre, and a maid from his library, which they had been trying to make comparatively neat and tidy, the irritable but never ill-natured Antiquary exclaims to Lovel :—

"You'll be poisoned here with the volumes of dust they have raised, but I assure you the dust was very ancient, peaceful, quiet dust, about an hour ago, and would have remained so for a hundred years, had not these gipsies disturbed it, as they do everything else in the world." [1]

Scott describes the early tastes and habits of Oldbuck when a boy, which were in some respects perhaps not unlike his own when at school.[2] Though he acquired some knowledge of the origin and system of the laws of his

[1] Chap. iii. [2] Lockhart's "Life of Scott."

country, he could never be persuaded to apply it to lucrative and practical purposes. It was not from any inconsiderate neglect of the advantages attending the possession of money that he thus deceived the hopes of his master:

"Were he thoughtless, light-headed, or *rei suæ prodigus* [wasteful of his means]," said his instructor, "I would know what to make of him. But he never pays away a shilling without looking anxiously after the change, makes his sixpence go farther than another lad's half-crown, and will ponder over an old black letter copy of the Acts of Parliament for days, rather than go to the golf or the change-house; and yet he will not bestow one of these days on a little business of routine that would put twenty shillings in his pocket—a strange mixture of frugality and industry and negligent indolence—I don't know what to make of him."[1]

Although there are some scenes of distress and sorrow most ably described throughout the story, it yet ends so happily and satisfactorily that the reader cannot fail to be pleased and gratified, as well as interested, by its cheerful perusal.

[1] Chap. ii.

THE BLACK DWARF

CHAPTER III

THE BLACK DWARF

IT is remarkable that two men of genial and social natures like Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott should yet have written upon misanthropy with indulgence, and made the victims of that dangerous mental malady interesting at least, if not attractive. It is true that Shakespeare's Timon of Athens and Scott's Dwarf, Elshender, the Recluse, are neither of them pure inventions. Both are to some extent founded on real characters—the first on an Athenian, of whom little is recorded in Grecian history, and the second on a certain Scottish dwarf named David Ritchie, described in the preface to the novel.

Scott compassionately writes of this strange character :

This poor man, whose misanthropy was founded in a sense of his own preternatural deformity, had yet his own particular enjoyments. Driven into solitude, he became an admirer of the beauties of nature. . . . It was perhaps for this reason that he was fond of Shenstone's Pastorals and some parts of "Paradise Lost." The author has heard his most unmusical voice repeat the celebrated description of Paradise, which he seemed fully to appreciate. . . . His only living favourites were a dog and a cat, to which he was particularly attached.

Yet both the Greek and the Scottish man of reality were probably less interesting characters than those described in the poem and the novel. Of the Athenian so little is known that an opinion should hardly be hazarded.[1] It is evident that Ritchie, as described by Scott, was superior both in sense and generosity to the original from whom the novelist takes him.

Although there may be some resemblance between the Timon of Shakespeare and the Elshender of Scott, the latter is of far "softer

[1] He is mentioned in Plutarch's "Life of Alcibiades" as "famed for his misanthropy," and as urging Alcibiades to destroy Athens and ruin his fellow-countrymen.

mould," for despite his passionate abuse of the whole human race he retains not only most benevolent feelings, but finally is the means of rescuing the heroine, Miss Vere, from a hated marriage. Like Timon, when calling his steward Flavius at last "Thou singly honest man," Elshender alone trusts his confidential agent, Ratcliffe, throughout; and this man seems almost the only link between the recluse and the outer world.

The scene of this story is laid in Scotland, close to the English border. The plot is slight, the whole story very short, and from a historical standpoint should have come in between Old Mortality and Rob Roy, being in the reign of Queen Anne, but no historical characters are introduced. The character of Mr. Vere, Laird of Ellieslaw, seems hardly natural. He connives at his daughter being carried off by the robber, Westburnflat, intending her to marry a certain Sir Frederick Langley, whom she had previously rejected. Vere's whole conduct appears not only mean and selfish, but vacillating and inconsistent.

He was formerly the successful rival of the Dwarf, Sir Edward Mauley, who recognises in Miss Vere a strong likeness to her late mother, whom he had once loved, and by whom he was rejected.

The heroine is rather an interesting, though not very original character; the hero, Earnscliff, though spirited and sensible, is seldom introduced; the young man, Hobbie Elliott, and the moss-trooper, Westburnflat, are drawn with great care, the last especially. The period being Queen Anne's reign, and a half-formed Jacobite conspiracy is faintly described, which never comes to maturity. Although Scott in "Rob Roy," "Waverley," and "Red Gauntlet" successively shows much sympathy for the Jacobites without exactly favouring their cause, yet in this short and comparatively unimportant story he rather ridicules them, but without any bitterness. A meeting of Jacobites,[1] or rather of some discontented people, is held at Ellieslaw Castle by Mr. Vere, Laird of Ellieslaw, the selfish, mean father of the

[1] Chap. xiii.

heroine, Isabella Vere. Scott writes of this singular gathering:

The men of rank and substance were not many in number, for almost all the large proprietors stood aloof, and most of the smaller gentry and yeomanry were of the Presbyterian persuasion, and therefore, however displeased with the Union, unwilling to engage in a Jacobite conspiracy. But there were some gentlemen of property who either from early principle, from religious motives, or sharing the ambitious views of Ellieslaw, had given countenance to his scheme, and there were also some fiery young men like Mareschal, desirous of signalising themselves by engaging in a dangerous enterprise, by which they hoped to vindicate the independence of their country. The other members of the party were persons of inferior rank and desperate fortunes who were now ready to rise in that part of the country, as they did afterwards in the year 1715 under Forster and Derwentwater, when a troop commanded by a Border gentleman named Douglas consisted almost entirely of freebooters, among whom the notorious Luck-in-a-Bag, as he was called, held a distinguished command. We think it necessary to mention these particulars, applicable solely to the province in which our story lies, because unquestionably the Jacobite party in the other parts of the kingdom consisted of much more formidable, as well as much more respectable, materials.

Among the bolder or most eager of these Jacobites Scott describes is the vehement young Mareschal-Wells. After drinking the health of King James VIII., as his Scottish followers called the elder Pretender, or James III., as he was termed by his followers in England, Mareschal threw the glass back over his head, exclaiming:

"It should never be profaned by a meaner toast."

All followed his example, and, amid the crash of glasses and the shouts of the company, pledged themselves to stand or fall with the principles and political interest which their toast expressed.

Scott then, in a rather sarcastic spirit, describes the various complaints of the company at this Jacobite meeting. Mr. Vere, the leader,

addressed the company in a style of inflammatory invective against the Government and its measures, but especially the Union; a treaty by means of which, he affirmed, Scotland had been at once cheated of her independence, her commerce, and her honour, and laid as a fettered slave at the foot of the rival against whom, through such a length of ages, she had honourably defended her rights. This

was touching a theme which found a responsive chord in the bosom of every man present.

"Our commerce is destroyed," halloed old John Rewcastle, a Jedburgh smuggler, from the lower end of the table.

"Our agriculture is ruined," said the Laird of Broken-girth-flow, a territory which since the days of Adam had borne nothing but ling and whortleberries.

"Our religion is cut up, root and branch," said the pimple-nosed pastor of the Episcopal meeting-house at Kirkwhistle.

"We shall shortly neither dare shoot a deer nor kiss a wench without a certificate from the presbytery and kirk treasurer," said Mareschal-Wells.

"Or make a brandy jeroboam in a frosty morning without licence from a commissioner of excise," said the smuggler.

"Or ride over the fell in a moonless night," said Westburnflat, "without asking leave of young Earnscliff or some Englified justice of the peace."

Here Scott makes this desperate robber reveal sentiments which would hardly have been avowed except by drunken ruffians, yet which prove Scott's contempt for the contemplated revolt:

"Those were gude days on the Border when there was neither peace nor justice heard of."

The villains of this book are chiefly on the Jacobite side, viz., Miss Vere's treacherous father and the odious Sir Frederick Langley, from marrying whom Miss Vere has so narrow an escape.

The chief interest of this pleasing and characteristic little story lies in the misshapen figure and noble nature of the Black Dwarf, Elshender, *alias* Sir Edward Mauley, who, though looking and speaking like an enemy to mankind, is in fact the good genius of the book. Like Shakespeare's Richard III., he often pathetically deplores his own deformity, but though he tries to harden his heart against his fellow-creatures, he cannot do so with the same success as the Richard of Shakespeare. The soliloquies with which Scott and Shakespeare inspire their two characters have a certain resemblance, though their respective conduct is so different. Richard exclaims:[1]

"I that am curtailed of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling Nature,

[1] Act I.

Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them.
Why, I, in this weak, piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
And descant on mine own deformity:
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
To entertain these fair, well-spoken days,
I am determined to prove a villain,
And hate the idle pleasures of these days."

Scott's melancholy dwarf reveals somewhat similar feelings to those of this fierce king:

"What have my screech-owl voice, my hideous form, and my misshapen features to do with the fairer workmanship of nature? And why should I interest myself in a race which accounts me a prodigy and an outcast, and has treated me as such?" [1]

Shakespeare's Timon of Athens and Scott's Black Dwarf alike seek in their state of misanthropy a delusive relief in utter solitude—the first completely hardened against all men, save

[1] Chap. vi.

one, by the ingratitude he has experienced; the latter by rejected love, together with the disgust and ridicule which his bodily deformity generally inspires. Yet both these men at one time possessed kind hearts and generous feelings. But Richard III.'s misanthropy, though fiercer and sterner with increasing age and ambition, has apparently always been the same. *He* has no idea of seeking relief in seclusion; the idea is hateful to him; on the contrary, action, excitement, even danger, are welcome to one who devotes all his bodily and mental energies to the gratification of ambition and revenge.

Scott's Elshender, even during fits of despair and rage, never utterly forgets religion and his God. Thus he exclaims: [1]

"All [mankind] are of a piece—one mass of wickedness, selfishness, and ingratitude—wretches who sin even in their devotions, and of such hardness of heart that they do not, without hypocrisy, even thank the Deity Himself for His warm sun and pure air."

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[1] Chap. vii.

Shakespeare, it is true, once, but only once, makes Richard III. appeal to Jesus in bewildered terror, when waking from his last dream before the battle of Bosworth:

"Have mercy, Jesu—Soft! I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!"[1]

The Pagan Timon, in his last sad address to his only faithful servant, Flavius, certainly appeals to his deities, but only as witnesses to his emotion, and though with some fear and admiration of their superior powers, yet without expressing either devotion or gratitude:

"Forgive my general and exceptional rashness,
You perpetual sober gods! I do proclaim
One honest man—mistake me not—but one.
No more, I pray.[2]

The last words of the Black Dwarf to Miss Vere, after saving her from marrying the odious Sir Frederick Langley, beautifully express his mind, which is noble and

[1] Act V. [2] Act IV.

generous, though hopelessly saddened by a disappointed life, preying upon his naturally proud and sensitive spirit:

Miss Vere kneeled beside the tomb of her mother, to whose statue her features exhibited a marked resemblance. She held the hand of the Dwarf, which she kissed repeatedly and bathed with tears. He stood fixed and motionless, excepting that his eyes glanced alternately on the marble figure and on the living suppliant. At length the large drops which gathered on his eyelashes compelled him to draw his hand across them.

"I thought," he said, "that tears and I had done, but we shed them at our birth and their spring dries not until we are in our graves. But no melting of this heart can dissolve my resolution. I part here at once and for ever, with all of which the memory" (looking at the tomb) "or the presence" (he pressed Isabella's hand) "is dear to me! It will avail nothing; you will hear of and see this lump of deformity no more. To you I shall be dead ere I am actually in my grave, and you will think of me as a friend disencumbered from the toils and crimes of existence."

It is evident, however, that all through this story the sentiments and actions of the Black

Dwarf are quite at variance. He storms and rages at human nature generally, while he strives to benefit, and even morally improve, all whom he knows. Even the reckless robber, Westburnflat, he tries to wean from his crimes, while to Miss Vere and the Elliots he is both a friend and benefactor :

"So," said the Dwarf, "rapine and murder again on horseback."

"On horseback?" said the bandit. "Ay, ay, Elshie; your leech-craft has set me on the bonny bay again."

"And all those promises of amendment which you made during illness forgotten?" continued Elshender.

"All clear away with the water-saps and panada," replied the unabashed convalescent. "Ye ken, Elshie, for they say ye are well acquaint with the gentleman—

When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be ;
When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he." [1]

That a man retaining so many human

[1] Chap. vi.

sympathies as the Black Dwarf should voluntarily lead a life of utter seclusion, when not bound by any religious vow, seems scarcely probable, though such a judge of human nature as Scott would not have so described him unless he knew of similar instances either within his own experience or that of others whose statements he could trust.

THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

CHAPTER IV

THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

THIS simple yet powerfully written story is, like "The Antiquary," one of Scottish domestic life, the scene being chiefly in Scotland, though a few chapters refer to the south of England. It is not entirely a work of fiction, the heroine, Jeanie Deans, having had her original in a certain Helen Walker. Though there is some resemblance between them, little seems known of Helen, except that she actually obtained her innocent sister's pardon for alleged child murder from Queen Caroline, wife of George II., having walked from Scotland to London for that purpose. Her sister, Isabella Walker, is slightly mentioned in the notes, but nothing is said of her bearing any resemblance to the Effie

Deans of the novel. All the other characters, except the noble Duke of Argyll and the cruel Captain Porteous, are imaginary, though described in Scott's most effective manner.

Of all Scott's heroines, Jeanie Deans is apparently his favourite, as he himself calls her so, which he never does in any other instance. She is, indeed, an admirable and superior character; her courageous piety, simplicity, good sense, and deep affection combine to make her such; for her whole conduct towards all she knows—father, sister, lover, friends, and enemies—comes as near the ideal standard of moral duty as human nature is perhaps capable of. Her old Presbyterian father, David Deans, seems rather a greater favourite with Scott than he deserves, for though a conscientious, worthy man, he is self-righteous and obstinate to a provoking degree. His neighbour, the widow Butler, is the mother of Reuben, the future hero of the story, who has just become a minister of the Kirk of Scotland. She makes an amusing mistake when exulting in her son's good fortune,

and thus grievously offends and shocks the old sincere and zealous but ignorant theologian, David Deans. Mrs. Butler says of her son :

"He can wag his head in a pulpit now, neibor Deans, think but o' that—my ain oe—and a'body maun sit still and listen to him, as if he were the Paip o' Rome."

"The what?—the who?—woman!" said Deans, with a sternness far beyond his usual gravity, as soon as these offensive words had struck upon the tympanum of his ear.

"Eh, guide us!" said the poor woman; "I had forgot what an ill will ye had aye at the Paip, and sae had my puir gudeman, Stephen Butler. Mony an afternoon he wad sit and take up his testimony again the Paip, and again baptising o' bairns, and the like."

"Woman!" reiterated Deans, "either speak about what ye ken something o', or be silent."[1]

Only those few who share his own theological views, which are certainly not derived from education, possess his confidence or good opinion. When old Deans is urged by a neighbour named Saddletree to employ a skilful lawyer to defend his accused daughter

[1] Chap. viii.

Effie, he objects to one after another as follows :

"What say ye to the old Laird of Cuffabout? He whiles thumps the dust out of a case gay and weel."

"He? the fause loon!" answered Deans—"he was in his bandaliers to hae joined the ungracious Highlanders in 1715."

"Weel, Arniston? there's a clever chield for ye!"

"Ay, to bring Popish medals in till their very library from that schismatic woman in the north, the Duchess of Gordon."

"What d' think ye of Kettlepunt?"

"He's an Arminian."

"Woodsetter?"

"He's, I doubt, Cocceian."

"Auld Whilliewhaw?"

"He's anything ye like."

"Young Nemo!"

"He's naething at a'."

"Ye're ill to please, neighbour. . . . What say ye to try young Mackenzie?"

"What, sir; wad ye speak to me," exclaimed the sturdy Presbyterian in excessive wrath, "about a man that has the blood of the saints at his fingers' ends? If the life o' the dear bairn that's under a suffering dispensation, and Jeanie's, my ain, and a' mankind's depended on my asking sic a

singular attraction, at least for some imaginative people.

This novel opens with the Edinburgh riot and execution of Captain Porteous by the mob —an historical event which is described in a most interesting and graphic manner. There seems, however, no real connection, though the novelist mingles them together, between this strange outbreak and the interesting historical tale of Helen Walker. The lover of Isabella Walker, the Effie Deans of the novel, was named Waugh, but Scott merely mentions him. The whole story of George Staunton and the Murdocksons, mother and daughter, is also apparently Scott's invention. The sketch of the stern Captain Porteous, however, is evidently historical, as well as the extraordinary coolness, self-restraint, and determination of the Edinburgh mob. This man, Captain of the City Guard in Edinburgh, had ordered his men to fire upon a band of stone-throwers in that city during the execution of a robber named Wilson. This man had some popular sympathy and many redeeming qualities, and was

never convicted for murder or of trying to commit it:

> Porteous [Scott writes] was wrought by this appearance of insurrection against his authority into a rage so headlong as made him forget that, the sentence having been fully executed, it was his duty not to engage in hostilities with the misguided multitude, but to draw off his men as fast as possible. He sprung from the scaffold, snatched a musket from one of his soldiers, commanded the party to give fire, and, as several witnesses concurred in swearing, set them an example by discharging his piece and shooting a man dead on the spot. Several soldiers obeyed his commands and followed his example, six or seven persons were slain, and a great many were hurt and wounded.[1]

For this outrage Porteous himself was sentenced to execution, to which many people looked forward as an act of justice, when, to the general surprise, a pardon or respite was granted to the condemned man, which thus disappointed the hopes of his many enemies in Edinburgh of seeing him publicly executed. But, as Scott writes[2]:

[1] Chap. iii. [2] Chap. iv.

The mob of Edinburgh when thoroughly excited had been at all times one of the fiercest which could be found in Europe,

and they resolved, therefore, to carry out the sentence on Porteous themselves. They succeeded in doing so, and the wretched man was executed by the mob instead of by the Government officials. This outrage, if such it can be called, since Porteous legally deserved his fate, was conducted or committed, Scott relates, in a calm, orderly, resolute manner, without any attempt at violence or plunder. The Edinburgh mob, despite the fierceness Scott attributes to them, would seem on this extraordinary occasion to have quietly substituted themselves for the legal executioners and executed their guilty though pardoned victim in strict accord with the laws actually existing.

Scott makes George Staunton, calling himself Geordie Robertson, Effie Deans' lover, lead the rioters, but escape the consequences. He was, however, hotly pursued by an eager police-

officer, Mr. Sharpitlaw, whose name somewhat expresses his character, unwillingly aided, or rather accompanied, by James Ratcliffe, nicknamed Jim the Rat, a former thief, but now transformed into a jailer. But, though tolerably trustworthy in his new profession, he has no wish to really aid in capturing young Robertson, with whom he had been slightly intimate in some wild frolics formerly. When Sharpitlaw first hints his design of capturing Robertson with the help of Ratcliffe and others, the two thief-catchers eye each other for a little time in silence. Here Scott reveals, as he often does, his love and knowledge of dogs in the following amusing comparison :

> They sat for five minutes silent, on opposite sides of a small table, and looked fixedly at each other, with a sharp, knowing, and alert cast of countenance, not unmingled with an inclination to laugh, and resembled more than anything else two dogs who, preparing for a game of romps, are seen to couch down and remain in that posture for a little time watching each other's movements and waiting which shall begin the game.[1]

[1] Chap. xvi.

This "game" in the novel leads to Sharpitlaw and Ratcliffe, with assistants, trying to capture Robertson.[1] They take Madge Wildfire with them, but she has no idea of their real purpose, while Ratcliffe on their way, hating to arrest Robertson, craftily tempts her to sing some songs, as if in warning from danger. She then unwittingly sings three, describing birds, animals, and men alike chasing each other for their lives:

> When the glede's (kite) in the blue cloud
> The lavrock (lark) lies still,
> When the hound's in the greenwood
> The hind keeps the hill.

The third unconscious warning alarms Robertson, being more directly applicable to his own case:

> O sleep ye sound, Sir James, she said,
> When ye suld rise and ride:
> There's twenty men, wi' bow and blade,
> Are seeking where ye hide.

The fugitive Staunton, *alias* Robertson, then

[1] Chap. xvii.

takes the alarm and makes his escape from his eager pursuers.

Staunton is the only son of a worthy English clergyman. He is a wild, dissipated, handsome youth, though possessing some generous qualities. His reckless, yet not ungenerous character is thus mentioned by an old servant of his father:

"'Tis a pity on Measter George too, for he has an open hand, and winna let a poor body want, an he has it."

And here Scott thoughtfully observes:

The virtue of profuse generosity, by which, indeed, they themselves are most directly advantaged, is readily admitted by the vulgar as a cloak for many sins.[1]

He has an illegitimate child by his nurse's daughter, Madge, whose mother, Meg Murdockson, destroys it to conceal her daughter's shame. After the murder poor Madge is insane, and she with her wicked mother become

[1] Chap. xxxiv.

the associates of the highway robbers, Frank Levitt and Tyburn Tom. Young Staunton, after deserting Madge, seduces Effie Deans, by whom he has a son, who is stolen directly after his birth by the vindictive hag, Meg Murdockson, in revenge for her daughter's desertion; and general suspicion is then directed against the unfortunate Effie of having either murdered or secretly made away with her stolen child. The chief interest of the story is centred in the extraordinary trial of Effie Deans for supposed child-murder, her strange conviction, without any proof of guilt, and her heroic sister's dangerous journey to London, where, through the influence of the Duke of Argyll, she in the novel sees Queen Caroline, and obtains Effie's pardon for a crime of which she is innocent.

According to the Scottish law at this period it would seem that concealment of childbirth was the great point against the accused Effie Deans. Thus when her half-sister, Jeanie, resolved to speak the truth at whatever cost, is asked in the Court if her sister ever revealed her con-

dition, she with sorrowful firmness can only reply:

"Alack! alack! she never breathed word to me about it."

Then follows Scott's description of this pathetic scene at the trial:

A deep groan passed through the Court. It was echoed by one deeper and more agonised from the unfortunate father. The hope to which unconsciously, and in spite of himself, he had still secretly clung had now dissolved, and the venerable old man fell forward senseless on the floor of the Court House, with his head at the foot of his terrified daughter. The unfortunate prisoner, with impotent passion, strove with the guards between whom she was placed. "Let me gang to my father—I *will* gang to him—I will gang to him—he is dead—he is killed—I hae killed him!" she repeated, in frenzied tones of grief which those who heard them did not speedily forget. Even in this moment of agony and general confusion Jeanie did not lose that superiority which a deep and firm mind assures to its possessor under the most trying circumstances. "He is my father—he is our father," she mildly repeated to those who endeavoured to separate them, as she stooped, shaded aside his grey hairs, and began assiduously to chafe his temples.[1]

[1] Chap. xxiii.

Soon after this pathetic scene, when Jeanie knew her sister was sentenced to death, she resolved at all risks to obtain Effie's pardon. She asks some neighbours if the King can grant mercy, and they remind her of the royal pardon granted to Porteous and some other condemned persons. Jeanie's heroic spirit is immediately roused to the utmost, and, confiding her old afflicted father to the care of Mrs. Saddletree, a friendly neighbour, she resolves on her London journey, but, inspired by that strong religious spirit which Scott ascribes to this his favourite heroine, and which was certainly shown by her prototype, Helen Walker, she knelt down by her father's bedside, exclaiming :

"O father, gie me ye're blessing. I dare not go till ye bless me. Say but 'God bless and prosper ye, Jeanie!'—try but to say that."

Instinctively, rather than by an exertion of intellect, the old man murmured a prayer that "purchased and promised blessings might be multiplied upon her."

"He has blessed mine errand," said his daughter,

rising from her knees; "and it is borne in upon my mind that I shall prosper." [1]

Scott, who amid all his sad or sublime passages often likes to divert himself and his readers by comic sketches, represents worthy Mrs. Saddletree, not yet knowing Jeanie's plan, looking after her and exclaiming to herself:

"I wish she binna raving, poor thing. There's something queer about a' thae Deanses. I dinna like folk to be sae muckle better than other folk, seldom gude comes o't. But if she's gaun to look after the kye at St. Leonard's, that's another story; to be sure, they maun be sorted. Grizzie, come up here and take tent o' the auld man and see he wants for naething. Ye silly tawpie" (addressing the maid-servant as she entered), "what garr'd ye busk up ye're cockernony that gate? I think there's been eneugh the day to gie an awfu' warning about ye're cockups and ye're fallal duds. See what they a' come to," &c.

Jeanie visits her condemned sister in prison, where the jailer, Jum Ratcliffe, a former

[1] Chap. xxv.

thief, is now a watchman over mutinous thieves and other convicts. This man is a strange mixture of evil and good, or rather redeeming qualities, and even his rough unscrupulous nature does not prevent his sympathising with these afflicted and interesting sisters. He tries to comfort them by saying how he himself escaped once from jail, but will not say how, when Jeanie heroically exclaims :

"My sister shall come out in the face of the sun. I will go to London and beg her pardon from the King and Queen. If they pardoned Porteous, they may pardon her; if a sister asks a sister's life on her bended knees, they *will* pardon her, they *shall* pardon her—and they will win a thousand hearts by it."

She hastens away from her sister, followed by Ratcliffe, who admiring her brave spirit, exclaims, though not without his familiar oaths :

"D——n me, I respect you and I can't help it. You have so much spunk that, d——n me, but I think there's some chance of your carrying the

day. But you must not go to the King till you have made some friend; try the Duke, try Mac-Callummore, he's Scotland's friend."

Jeanie here ascertains that this Duke of Argyll is nearly related to a former Duke, who had been executed during what she terms the "persecution" of the Whig Party. Ratcliffe, who, despite all his past rogueries, retains some right feeling, then gives her a pass, if she should meet with thieves on the road, saying:

"Deil ane o' them will touch an acquaintance o' Daddie Ratton's [himself]; for though I am retired from public practice, yet they ken I can do a good or an ill turn yet. . . . And now away wi' ye and stick to Argyll; if anybody can do the job it maun be him."

Jeanie Deans, on her journey to London, is captured in England by Levitt and Tyburn Tom and taken by them to an old barn where the hag Murdockson and her daughter Madge are together.[1] Levitt tells Tom that he had

[1] Chap. xxx.

promised old Meg to intercept Jeanie and make her return to Scotland, Meg having heard of her journey's object and spitefully wishing all harm to her daughter's rival, Effie Deans. Jeanie, while trying or pretending to sleep, overhears some talk between Meg and Levitt, the former dreading lest Effie should escape and marry Staunton, and having apparently some strange lingering notion that this young profligate, once her nursling, may yet marry or in some way make amends to her unfortunate daughter Madge. Jeanie overhears the robber Levitt ask the old hag her reasons for interfering with her journey to London, and Meg offering him more and more drink, he refuses, exclaiming:

"No, no! When a woman wants mischief from you, she always begins by filling you drunk."

Then reveals Jeanie's real object in going to London, adding that if Jeanie succeeds in it young Staunton may likely marry her rescued sister, Effie Deans. Levitt, a bold coarse

ruffian, though not without some touch of humanity, answers:

"Who cares if he does?"

and the old woman fiercely replies:

"Who cares, ye donnard Neddie? *I* care, and I will strangle her with my own hands rather than she should come to Madge's preferment."

Levitt scornfully exclaims, naturally enough:

"Madge's preferment? Does your old blind eyes see no farther than that? If he is as you say, d'ye think he'll ever marry a mooncalf like Madge? Ecod, that's a good one—marry Madge Wildfire—Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hark ye, ye crack-rope padder, born beggar, and bred thief," replied the hag, "suppose he never marries the wench, is that a reason he should marry another, and that other to hold my daughter's place, and she crazed, and I a beggar, and all along of him?"

Then, alluding to Robertson's guilt in the Porteous execution, she continues:

"But I know that of him will hang him—I know that of him will hang him, if he had a thousand lives. I know that of him will hang—hang—hang him!"

Levitt coolly retorts with the natural question :

"Then why don't you hang—hang—hang him? There would be more sense in that than in wreaking yourself here upon two wenches that have done you and your daughter no ill."

"No ill," answered the old woman, "and he to marry this jail-bird, if ever she gets her foot loose?"

"But as there is no chance of his marrying a bird of your brood, I cannot, for my soul, see what you have to do with all this," again replied the robber, shrugging his shoulders.

The old woman repeats she longs for revenge, and Levitt says, after a pause :

"If revenge is your wish, you should take it on the young fellow himself."

To these words old Meg makes a remarkable answer, revealing for the first time some touch of human feeling, if not affection :

"I wish I could," she said, drawing in her breath with the eagerness of a thirsty person, while mimicking the action of drinking; "I wish I could! but no, I cannot—I cannot!"

Levitt, who cannot understand these, to him, strange scruples of the old nurse, replies:

"And why not? You would think little of peaching and hanging him for this Scotch affair. Rat me, one might have milled the Bank of England and less noise about it."

"I have nursed him at this withered breast," answered the old woman, folding her hands on her bosom as if pressing an infant to it, "and though he has proved an adder to me—though he has been the destruction of me and mine—though he has made me company for the devil, if there be a devil, and food for hell, if there be such a place, yet I cannot take his life. No, I cannot," she continued, with an appearance of rage against herself; "I have thought of it, I have tried it. But, Francis Levitt, I canna gang through wi't. Na, na—he was the first bairn I ever nurst—ill I had been—and man can never ken what woman feels for the bairn she has held first to her bosom."

Levitt naturally replies:

"To be sure, we have no experience."

The scene between the Duke of Argyll and Jeanie in London must be partly true, though probably no details of his real interview with Helen Walker have been preserved. The admiration of Scott for the Duke of Argyll and his family rather contradicts the idea that the novelist favours Jacobitism. He writes the following noble description of this Duke, whom the novelist evidently thinks a model for his distinguished class.[1]

He was alike free from the ordinary vices of statesmen, falsehood, namely, and dissimulation, and from those of warriors, inordinate and violent thirst after self-aggrandisement. Scotland, his native country, stood at this time in a very precarious and doubtful situation. She was indeed united to England, but the cement had not had time to acquire consistence. . . . Scotland had, besides, the disadvantage of being divided into intestine factions which hated each other bitterly, and waited but for a signal to break forth into action. In such circumstances, another man with the talents and rank of Argyll, but without a mind so happily regulated, would have sought to rise from the

[1] Chap. xxxv.

earth in the whirlwind and direct its fury. He chose a course more safe and honourable.

Soaring above the petty distinctions of faction, his voice was raised, whether in office or in opposition, for those measures which were at once just and lenient. His high military talents enabled him, during the memorable year 1715, to render such services to the House of Hanover as perhaps were too great to be either acknowledged or repaid. He had employed, too, his utmost influence in softening the consequences of that insurrection to the unfortunate gentlemen whom a mistaken sense of loyalty had engaged in the affair, and was rewarded by the esteem and affection of his country in an uncommon degree. . . . But he was not a favourite with George II., his consort, or his ministers.

The Duke's interview with Jeanie Deans was apparently historical, and though this interesting conversation is doubtless in Scott's own words, they must, at least to some extent, express what really took place, under the peculiar circumstances of this extraordinary scene. The Duke, perceiving her shyness or embarrassment at first, says :

"Just speak out a plain tale and show you have a Scotch tongue in your head."

Jeanie, re-assured, then replies :

"Sir, I am muckle obliged! Sir, I am the sister of that poor unfortunate criminal, Effie Deans, who is ordered for execution at Edinburgh."

"Ah!" said the Duke, "I have heard of that unhappy story, I think—a case of child murder, under a special act of parliament—Duncan Forbes mentioned it at dinner the other day."

The Duke, after hearing her account, appoints her to accompany him in a day or two to the Queen's presence. Jeanie's interview with Queen Caroline, in the presence of the Duke of Argyll, her eloquence in pleading for her sister's life, and the kindness of the Queen,[1] is perhaps the most pleasing scene in the whole novel. Though this scene is apparently Scott's invention, its purpose and result seem historically true.[2]

[1] Chap. xxxvii.

[2] The late Dean Stanley ("Memorials of Westminster Abbey") thus mentions the Queen and Scott's description in this novel: "Queen Caroline (consort of George II.), the most discriminating patroness of

Scott writes, recalling the energetic French Queen, Margaret of Anjou, wife of the peaceful king, Henry VI. :

Since Margaret of Anjou no Queen-consort had exercised such weight in the political affairs of England, and the personal address which she displayed on many occasions had no small share in reclaiming from their political heresy many of those determined Tories, who, after the reign of the Stewarts had been extinguished in the person of Queen Anne, were disposed rather to transfer their allegiance to her brother, the Chevalier St. George, than to acquiesce in the settlement of the Crown on the Hanover family.

Introduced to the Queen's presence by the patriotic, influential Argyll, Jeanie thus concludes her pathetic entreaty to the Queen to spare her condemned sister's life :

". . . When the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body—and seldom may it visit your

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learning and philosophy that down to that time had ever graced the throne of England, endeared to every reader of the master-works of historical fiction by her appearance in 'The Heart of Midlothian.'"

Leddyship—and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low—lang and late may it be yours!—O, my Leddy, then it isna what we hae dune for oursells, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly. And the thought that ye have intervened to spare the puir thing's life will be sweeter in that hour, come when it may, than if a word of your mouth could hang the haill Porteous mob at the tail of ae tow."

Tear followed tear down Jeanie's cheek as, her features glowing and quivering with emotion, she pleaded her sister's cause with a pathos which was at once simple and solemn.

"This is eloquence," said her Majesty to the Duke of Argyll. "Young woman," she continued, addressing herself to Jeanie, "*I* cannot grant a pardon to your sister, but you shall not want my warm intercession with his Majesty."

This assurance, as Argyll knows and says, is equivalent to a free pardon from the King.

The hero of this novel, Reuben Butler, a quiet, sensible country schoolmaster, seems hardly worthy of Jeanie Deans, and is an invention of Scott's, as the real Jeanie (Helen Walker) never married.

Scott describes the kind Duke of Argyll entertaining at his hunting lodge in Scotland Jeanie, her father, David Deans, and young Reuben Butler, previous to the latter's appointment as a minister of the Kirk of Scotland at Knocktarlitie. On this gratifying occasion, when drinking the Duke's health:

David Deans himself added perhaps the first huzza that his lungs had ever uttered to swell the shout with which the pledge was received. Nay, so exalted in heart was he upon this memorable occasion, and so much disposed to be indulgent, that he expressed no dissatisfaction when three bagpipers struck up "The Campbells are coming."

The health of the reverend minister at Knocktarlitie was received with similar honours, and there was a roar of laughter when one of his brethren slyly subjoined the addition of "A good wife to our brother, to keep the Manse in order."

On this occasion David Deans was delivered of his first-born joke, and apparently the parturition was accompanied with many throes, for sorely did he twist about his physiognomy and much did he stumble in his speech before he could express his idea "That the lad being now wedded to his spiritual bride, it was hard to threaten him with ane temporal spouse in the same day." He then

laughed a hoarse and brief laugh, and was suddenly grave and silent, as if abashed at his own vivacious effort.[1]

One very sad episode in this interesting story painfully affects all readers of sense and feeling—the wanton murder of the harmless maniac, Madge Wildfire, by the brutal mob at Carlisle. These people think the poor madwoman is a witch, and therefore try to drown her; and though she is rescued from them at the time, she dies from the effects of their brutality.

Jeanie visits her in the workhouse. Madge does not recognise her, while with her last breath she sings several songs, all disconnected, yet each beautifully pathetic. Of these, perhaps, the following lines are the most impressive and affecting:

"When the fight of grace is fought,
When the marriage-vest is wrought,
When Faith hath chased cold Doubt away
And Hope but sickens at delay—

[1] Chap. xlvi.

"When Charity, imprisoned here,
Longs for a more expanded sphere,
Doff thy robes of sin and clay:
Christian, rise, and come away."[1]

This sad case, it is to be feared, is no invention, though the character of Madge Wildfire may be so; for it is a fact that absurd and intense horror of supposed witchcraft long influenced some of the English and many of the Scottish peasantry.[2]

One of the most exciting scenes in this novel is the strange interview between Jeanie and George Staunton, her sister's lover, at Muschat's Cairn, where he threatens her life if she refuses to swear a falsehood to save her accused sister. It is here that Jeanie first displays that high courage which, united with strong common-

[1] Chap. xl.

[2] The last execution for witchcraft in the British Empire took place in Presbyterian Scotland. The associated Presbytery in 1736 left a solemn protest against the repeal of the laws against witchcraft (Lecky's "England in the Eighteenth Century," vol. ii.).

sense and warm affections, makes her so superior and interesting a character. In a previous interview with Reuben Butler, young Staunton, who, though reckless and dissipated, retains some noble qualities, is described in a very singular manner. The popular superstition of a fiend assuming an attractive human form evidently strikes Scott's fancy, as he again mentions it in "Nigel," in the case of the treacherous Lord Dalgarno, who has much more of the fiend in him than young Staunton, being a thoroughly base character. Staunton vehemently tells Butler, who asks who he is, that he is the devil—an admission which effectually confounds the young schoolmaster:

. . . Was this indeed the Roaring Lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour? This was a question which pressed itself on Butler's mind with an earnestness that cannot be conceived by those who live in the present day. The fiery eye, the abrupt demeanour, the occasionally harsh, yet studiously subdued tone of voice; the features, handsome, but now clouded with pride, now disturbed with suspicion, now inflamed with passion; those dark hazel eyes which he sometimes shaded

with his cap, as if he were averse to have them seen while they were occupied with keenly observing the motions and bearing of others; those eyes that were now turbid with melancholy, now gleaming with scorn, and now sparkling with fury—was it the passions of a mere mortal they expressed, or the emotions of a fiend who seeks, and seeks in vain, to conceal his fiendish designs under the borrowed mask of manly beauty? The whole partook of the mien, language, and port of the ruined Archangel.[1]

Later on[2] this profligate, yet not ungenerous, young man writes to Jeanie when on her journey to London, tempting her to give him up to justice for his share in the death of Captain Porteous, if his betrayal would save her sister, ending his letter in these urgent, emphatic words:

". . . Go then to the Duke of Argyll, and when other arguments fail you, tell him you have it in your power to bring to condign punishment the most active conspirator in the Porteous mob. He will hear you on this topic, should he be deaf to every other. Make your own terms, for they will be at your own making. You know where I am to be found. . . . I need not remind you to ask

[1] Chap. xi. [2] Chap. xxxiv.

your sister's life, for that you will do of course; but make terms of advantage for yourself. Ask wealth and reward—office and income for Butler—ask anything—you will get anything—and all for delivering to the hands of the executioner a man most deserving of his office—one who, though young in years, is old in wickedness, and whose most earnest desire is, after the storms of an unquiet life, to sleep and be at rest."

Jeanie soon destroys "this extraordinary letter," and, after obtaining her sister's pardon, writes to Staunton,[1] telling him of her success, and that she has never mentioned him. She signs her short letter with her usual cautious commonsense, remembering Staunton's dangerous position:

"Ye ken wha."

It is remarked by Sir Archibald Alison in his brief notice of Scott's works[2] that he cared little for the pathetic; but when he does write

[1] Chap. xxxix.

[2] "History of Europe," vol. i.

in that strain, few if any writers can surely equal him in beauty of expression or intensity and purity of thought. One of the most moving scenes in this excellent novel is when Jeanie, after her sister's condemnation, determines to go to London to plead for her life at a moment when her aged father, broken down and stupefied by distress of mind, gives no assistance, and she is left entirely to the guidance of her own firm, resolute spirit. The character of Effie Deans is evidently Scott's invention, as he gives few particulars of her prototype, Isabella Walker, but the little that is known or said of Helen in the preface closely resembles the Jeanie of the novel; the same courage and prudence are shown even in the few recorded details. Scott had heard[1] that when Helen was asked by any neighbours about her London journey, "she aye turned the conversation," which quite accords with the remarkable modesty and good sense of Jeanie herself.

In chapter xxxviii. Walter Scott makes the

[1] Introduction.

following interesting, if not valuable, remarks on the Scottish character generally :

Perhaps one ought to be actually a Scotsman to conceive how ardently, under all distinctions of rank and situation, they feel their mutual connection with each other as natives of the same country. There are, I believe, more associations common to the inhabitants of a rude and wild, than of a well-cultivated and fertile country ; their ancestors have more seldom changed their place of residence ; their mutual recollection of remarkable objects is more accurate ; the high and the low are more interested in each others welfare ; the feelings of kindred and relationship are more widely extended, and, in a word, the bonds of patriotic affection, always honourable, even when a little too exclusively strained, have more influence on men's feelings and actions.

Towards the end of the story it is not easy to recognise, in the cold, listless, affected Lady Staunton, the timid and passionate Effie of younger days ; and, indeed, this change is hardly natural, if possible, and is perhaps the most unsatisfactory part of the book. The wild life and character of her son is also entirely Scott's invention.

The sketch of the kind and sagacious Queen Caroline is, doubtless, founded on Scott's accurate knowledge of history, and is amply confirmed by recent historians.

Although Scott, in the true spirit of a novelist, makes Jeanie marry the man of her choice and have a flourishing family, he states that the real Jeanie, Helen Walker, died unmarried, in obscure poverty, upon which circumstance he makes this beautiful and characteristic reflection :

> That a character so distinguished for her undaunted love of virtue lived and died in poverty, if not want, serves only to show us how insignificant in the sight of Heaven are our principal objects of ambition upon earth.[1]

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[1] Preface to "Heart of Midlothian."

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

CHAPTER V

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

THIS beautiful tragedy is in its chief incidents, though only to some extent, founded on fact, as avowed in the preface. Yet so little is known of the individual characters of the story that Scott may almost claim the merit of conceiving as well as describing them.

Edgar Ravenswood is one of the most interesting of Scott's heroes, while Lucy Ashton is certainly one of his most attractive and pleasing heroines. While the leading incidents of this tale are founded on real events occurring in the Scottish families of Lord Rutherford (the original of Ravenswood) and Lord Stair (Sir William Ashton), the enmity between the Ravenswood and Ashton families, and the love of their descendants for each other, much resemble in

feeling and sentiment Shakespeare's affecting tragedy of "Romeo and Juliet." This pathetic story was evidently often in Scott's mind when writing this novel, as some chapters are headed with quotations from it. Yet though Lucy Ashton and her stern mother to some extent resemble Lady Capulet and Juliet, Ravenswood himself resembles Hamlet in some respects as much as Romeo, though situated more like the latter. Lady Ashton is intimated by Scott to resemble the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and her conduct in the story to be founded on that of Lady Stair, while "the mean-spirited and tricky" Sir William Ashton is specially declared to bear no resemblance to the eminent lawyer, Lord Stair, except probably in legal knowledge and acuteness. Yet Lady Ashton seems more consistent and determined than the impetuous Lady Marlborough, whose imprudent vehemence finally exhausted the patience of her indulgent Sovereign and friend, Queen Anne, and caused her expulsion from the English Court.[1]

[1] Macaulay's "History of England."

The character of Bucklaw, whom Lucy Ashton is forced by her mother to marry, bears no certain resemblance to the Laird of Baldoon, the Bucklaw of reality; and all the other characters in this story are pure inventions, save that of the old woman, Ailsie Gourlay, who had her prototype in Scottish history. Of these inventions the most striking perhaps is Caleb Balderstone, the faithful old servant of Ravenswood, whose constant efforts to conceal his ruined young master's poverty are half amusing and half sad, as they would certainly have been in real life. Colonel Douglas Ashton, the worthy son of his haughty, implacable mother, is not unlike Shakespeare's Tybalt in "Romeo and Juliet," though he is not introduced till the end of the book, when he challenges Ravenswood to a duel. Bucklaw, though rash and thoughtless, is rather amiable and well-disposed than otherwise. At the beginning of the story Ravenswood and Lucy are first introduced by his saving her father's life and her own from the attack of a savage bull. This event naturally causes a further acquaintance, though entirely

of Sir William Ashton's seeking, during his wife's absence, for by this lady he is completely overruled. It is at this time that Ravenswood and Lucy exchange love-tokens by the Mermaiden's Well in Ravenswood Park, now belonging to the Ashtons.

In this whole story Scott rather inclines to dwell upon the marvellous, and to make gloomy prophecies come true, without positively stating his belief in any such mysterious influences in human affairs. This Mermaiden's Well, where Ravenswood and Lucy exchange vows of fidelity and "broke betwix them" a piece of gold, which each keeps as a pledge from the other, was once the scene of a beautiful and sad fairy legend, evidently Scott's invention, which, however, enhances the charm and interest of the interview between the lovers.

This interesting scene[1] is beautifully expressed, at least to musical people, in the pathetic duet, "Sulla tomba che rinserra il tradito genitore," in Donizetti's delightful opera, "Lucia di Lammermoor." In this scene Ravenswood states to Lucy

[1] Chap. xx.

Ashton his father's wrongs at the hands of her family, and the terrible oath of vengeance which he had sworn against them. He exclaims :

"In the evening which succeeded my poor father's funeral, I cut a lock from my hair, and, as it consumed in the fire, I swore that my rage and revenge should pursue his enemies until they shrivelled before me like that scorched-up symbol of annihilation."

"It was a deadly sin," said Lucy, turning pale, "to make a vow so fatal."

"I acknowledge it," said Ravenswood, "and it had been a worse crime to keep it. It was for your sake that I abjured those purposes of vengeance."

The previous warnings of the two faithful old servants of the ruined Ravenswood family—Caleb and blind Alice Gray—are almost enough to convince the reader that misfortune is in store for the young lovers. The old woman, loyal to the Ravenswood family yet grateful to Lucy Ashton for personal kindness, warns Ravenswood against the Ashtons, when visiting her cottage, and accidentally drops a piece of gold he was giving her on the ground.

"Let it remain an instant on the ground," said Alice, "and believe me, that piece of gold is an

emblem of her whom you love; she is as precious, I grant, but you must stoop even to abasement before you can win her." [1]

Caleb vainly implores his master never to visit his patrimonial estate while belonging to the Ashtons. When in his ancestral castle [2] as a mere visitor, Ravenswood see portraits of the Ashton family, all more or less unpleasing, replacing those of his own ancestors.

"And it is to make room for such scarecrows as these," thought Ravenswood, "that my ancestors have been torn down from the walls which they erected."

When Lucy appears, however, Scott thus beautifully describes the immediate change in Ravenswood's feelings:

The grace of her manner and of her smile cleared, with a celerity which surprised the Master [of Ravenswood] himself, all the gloomy and unfavourable thoughts which had for some time overclouded his fancy . . . and while he gazed on Lucy Ashton, she seemed to be an angel descended on earth, unallied to the coarser mortals among whom she deigned to dwell

[1] Chap. xix. [2] Chap. xviii.

for a season. Such is the power of beauty over a youthful and enthusiastic fancy.

Thus Ravenswood overcomes, at least for a time, that hereditary hatred towards the Ashton family which had hitherto been his ruling passion, owing to his sudden and ardent attachment to Lucy, and disregards all the warnings and alarming prophecies of old Caleb. Caleb repeats the following gloomy prophecy to young Ravenswood, to dissuade him from visiting his father's castle while in possession of his enemies:

"When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,
And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,
And his name shall be lost for evermoe."

His young master, however, persists in riding there with Sir William Ashton and his daughter. Balderstone, looking eagerly after them, exclaims:

"Close to her bridle-rein—ay, close to her bridle-rein. Wisely saith the holy man. By this also you may know that woman hath power over all men, and

without this lass would not our ruin be altogether fulfilled." [1]

The return of Lady Ashton about this time changes the whole course of the story, and she expels Ravenswood immediately from his ancestral castle. He departs full of anger and shame, and rides on his way by the Mermaiden's Well. Here he perceives a white figure resembling old Alice Gray, which instantly disappears, and Ravenswood, hastening to her cottage, finds that she has just expired. In this instance Scott carefully avoids confessing any belief in those supernatural apparitions which he yet takes evident and peculiar delight in describing with such force and beauty.

The striking conversation which follows between Ravenswood and the old sexton reminds the readers somewhat of the scene in "Hamlet" between the hero and the grave-diggers, a quotation from which is prefixed to this chapter.

This sexton, a cunning, thankless fellow, not

[1] Chap. xviii.

recognising Ravenswood, freely blames the imprudence of the latter's unfortunate ancestors, under whom he had lived in comfort, though now, like all the Ravenswood tenantry, he is under the griping lawyer, Sir William Ashton. The sexton,[1] alluding to Ravenswood's father, says, engrossed by his own personal troubles while utterly ignoring those of his unfortunate former landlord :

"He loot his affairs gang to the dogs and let in this Sir William Ashton on us, that will gie naething for naething, and just removed me and a' the puir creatures that had bite and soup in the Castle and a hole to put our heads in when things were in the auld way."

Upon hearing this Edgar Ravenswood naturally remarks :

"If Lord Ravenswood protected his people, my friend, while he had the means of doing so, I think they might spare his memory."

"Ye are welcome to your ain opinion, sir," said the sexton, "but ye winna persuade me that he did his duty either to himsel' or to his poor dependent

[1] Chap. xxiv.

creatures, in guiding us the gate he has done, he might hae gi'en us life-rent tacks o' our bits of houses and yards; and me, that's an auld man, living in yon miserable cabin, that's fitter for the dead than the quick, and killed wi' rheumatise; and John Smith, in my dainty bit mailing and his window glazen, and a' because Ravenswood guided his gear like a fule."

"It is but too true," said Ravenswood, conscience struck; "the penalties of extravagance extend far beyond the prodigal's own sufferings."[1]

A remarkable part of the story is where Lady Ashton employs old Ailsie Gourlay, supposed by some to be a witch, but who is a malignant, cunning impostor, nominally to nurse Lucy Ashton, but really to frighten her, by stories and prophecies about the Ravenswood family, into breaking her engagement with Edgar Ravenswood:

Dame Gourlay's tales were at first of a mild and interesting character. Gradually, however, they assumed a darker and more mysterious character, and became such as, told by the midnight lamp, and enforced by the tremulous tone, the quivering and livid lip, the uplifted skinny forefinger, and the

[1] Chap. xxiv.

shaking head of the blue-eyed hag, might have appalled a less credulous imagination in an age more hard of belief. The old Sycorax saw her advantage, and gradually narrowed her magic circle around the devoted victim on whose spirit she practised.[1]

But Lady Ashton mistakes her daughter's character throughout, while calling her scornfully "her Lammermoor shepherdess." Like many harsh persons, she mistakes gentleness and mildness for weakness or stupidity, and really expected that Ailsie's stories would soon frighten her from desiring any connection with the Ravenswood family, and that then she would readily consent to marry Bucklaw. Yet Lucy, though mild and yielding, possesses strong and deep affections; she is equally unlike her mean, tricky father, or her stern, vindictive mother. In the beginning of this novel[2] Lucy's father hears her, while unseen, sing a song which, though short, is beautifully expressive of her character and natural disposition.

[1] Chap. xxxi.

[2] Chap. iii.

Scott, whose taste in music apparently differs from that of most people, who at operas and concerts like to see as well as to hear the vocalists, writes:

. . . Music when the performers are concealed affects us with a pleasure mingled with surprise, and reminds us of the natural concert of birds among the leafy bowers. The statesman, though little accustomed to give way to emotions of this simple and natural class, was still a man and a father. He stopped therefore and listened while the silver tones of Lucy Ashton's voice mingled with the accompaniment in an ancient air, to which some one had adapted the following words:

"Look not thou on beauty's charming,—
Sit thou still when kings are arming,—
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,—
Speak not when the people listens,—
Stop thine ear against the singer,—
From the red gold keep thy finger,—
Vacant heart and hand and eye,—
Easy live and quiet die."

In pathetic explanation of these simple ideas, very inconsistent with those of the heroine of a future Italian opera, Scott adds:

Lucy's sentiments seemed chill because nothing had occurred to interest or awaken them. Her life had hitherto flowed on in a uniform and gentle tenor, and happy for her had not its present smoothness of current resembled that of the stream as it glides downwards to the waterfall.[1]

This beautiful comparison may somewhat prepare readers for the future events in this pathetic tragedy. The effect of mental persecution and terror upon her certainly banishes all idea of marrying Ravenswood, but with his abandonment her reason also disappears, and thus she becomes the victim of those who do not, and perhaps could not, understand her docile, yet devoted and sensitive nature.

The old woman, Ailsie Gourlay, with two others as artful and malignant as herself, often remind the reader, notwithstanding their Scottish accent and low habits, of the three witches in "Macbeth," whom they resemble in many respects, except in being thoroughly human in the worst sense of the term. Ravenswood overhears the following "uncanny" conversation

[1] Chap. iii.

between these three old hags directly after Alice Gray's death :

". . . The very deil has turned as hard-hearted now as the Lord Keeper [Sir William Ashton], and the grit folk that hae breasts like whin-stane. They prick us and they pine us, and they put us on the pennywinkles for witches, and if I say my prayers backwards ten times Satan will never gie me amends o' them."

"Did ye ever see the foul thief?" asked her neighbour.

"Na!" replied the other spokeswoman, "but I trow I hae dreamed o' him many a time, and I think the day will come they will burn me for 't. But ne'er mind, cummer, we hae this dollar o' the Master's [Ravenswood's], and we'll send down for bread, and for yill, tobacco, and a drap brandy to burn, and a wee pickle saft sugar, and be there deil or nae deil, lass, we'll hae a merry night o't'."[1]

Shakespeare's visionary creations in "Macbeth" seem, indeed, malevolent enough, yet they inspire more interest and wonder than actual detestation. But Scott's three earthly witches are merely cunning, malevolent old women

"hated of all and hating,"

[1] Chap. xxiii.

for which, indeed, they are to be pitied as well as detested. It is clear that in these wretched instances Scott describes a class of persons, at one time influential and dangerous among the Scottish peasantry, who, by pretended skill in prophesying and fortune-telling, incurred at once the fear and hatred of those on whose ignorant credulity they imposed for their own miserable subsistence.

It is, of course, deplorable to read in the pages of Scott himself, Hallam, Lecky, and other historians, of the awful cruelties upon these wretched impostors, who, odious and wicked as most of them were, could not help being innocent of the impossible guilt of witchcraft, at least according to modern ideas. For it appears, both from Scott's novels and his work upon witchcraft, as well as from historical evidence,[1] that in Scotland alleged witchcraft was far more believed in, and persons accused of it punished with far greater cruelty, than in England, while in Ireland this

[1] See Hallam's "Constitutional History," Buckle's "Civilisation," and Lecky's "Rationalism."

singular superstition appears to have been less known.

Yet at one period of Christian history belief in witchcraft animated even learned men of most denominations, and the celebrated German reformer, Luther himself, could not get rid of the idea, and actually sanctioned the burning of all witches, or rather of those who appeared to be so, on what must have been unsatisfactory evidence. How, notwithstanding its fearful penalty, even the most malignant and degraded human beings dared incur suspicion of witchcraft, as so many actually did, is only explicable by remembering the intense love of power in some persons, which this strange imposture was sure to gratify for a time. Yet, though the cruel, punishments inflicted on alleged witches were wholly unjustifiable, and are now acknowledged so in all civilised countries, many of these unfortunate victims were by no means injured innocents. On the contrary, some, if not most of them, appear to have been either guilty or at least capable of almost every crime except that for which they suffered. Scott writes :

"I find it mentioned in the articles of dittay against Eilsie Gourlay . . . that she had by the aid and delusions of Satan shown to a young person of quality in a mirror glass a gentleman then abroad to whom the said young person was betrothed and who appeared in the vision to be in the act of bestowing his hand upon another lady." [1]

The most striking and dramatic event in this beautiful novel is the sudden return of Ravenswood, and his denunciation of the Ashtons at the marriage of his affianced bride with Bucklaw. This scene is founded on the real story, though amplified and rendered most exciting by such a hand as Scott's. He carefully records the curious Scriptural quotation with which the real as well as the imaginary Lady Ashton repelled the reproaches of the unfortunate lover. In the novel a worthy Presbyterian clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Bide-the-Bent, is asked by Lady Ashton to read loud to Ravenswood a Scriptural passage

"from the Levitical law which declares a woman shall be free of a vow which her parents dissent from,"

[1] Chap. xxxi.

to justify her daughter breaking off her engagement to him. On hearing this Ravenswood exclaims[1] with indignation, and "looking towards Lucy:"

"And is this all? . . . Are you willing to barter sworn faith, the exercise of free will and the feelings of mutual affection to this wretched hypocritical sophistry?"

"Hear him!" said Lady Ashton, looking to the clergyman. "Hear the blasphemer!"

"May God forgive him," said Bide-the-Bent, "and enlighten his ignorance."

"Hear what I have sacrificed for you," said Ravenswood, still addressing Lucy, "ere you sanction what has been done in your name. The honour of an ancient family, the urgent advice of my best friends, have been in vain used to sway my resolution; neither the arguments of reason, nor the portents of superstition, have shaken my fidelity. Are you prepared to pierce my heart for its fidelity, with the very weapon which my rash confidence entrusted to your grasp?"

Upon the clergyman assuring him that no fraud or compulsion has been practised upon the unfortunate bride, who remains silent and as

[1] Chap. xxxiii.

if partly unconscious during this extraordinary scene, Ravenswood then exclaims, laying down before Lucy the signed paper and broken piece of gold:

"There, madam, are the evidences of your first engagement; may you be more faithful to that which you have just formed. I will trouble you to return the corresponding tokens of my ill-placed confidence — I ought rather to say of my egregious folly."

Lucy returned the scornful glance of her lover with a gaze from which perception seemed to have been banished, yet she seemed partly to have understood his meaning, for she raised her hands as if to undo a blue ribbon which she wore around her neck. She was unable to accomplish her purpose, but Lady Ashton cut the ribbon asunder, and detached the broken piece of gold, which Miss Ashton had till then worn concealed in her bosom; the written counterpart of the lovers' engagement she for some time had had in her own possession. With a haughty curtsey she delivered both to Ravenswood.

The stupified, half-conscious state of the terrified bride, the violence of her mother, and the indignation of Ravenswood during this extraordinary scene, are avowedly drawn from the tradition

which Scott mentions in the preface, and also at the end of the last chapter but one. The death of the bride, soon after her marriage, when she stabs Bucklaw, though not fatally, even her last exclamation, uttered in grinning exultation,

"So you have ta'en up your bonny bridegroom,"

meaning the wounded Bucklaw, are alike founded on recorded facts.

The last most pathetic chapter, relating the fate both of Ravenswood and of Caleb Balderstone, is Scott's own invention. Here he relied upon his own almost unrivalled imagination; and Ravenswood's death in the quicksand, as well as the last days of the faithful Caleb, are described with his characteristic power and pathos. This story has been always deservedly a favourite, not only with the reading public, but with painters, dramatists, and musicians. It certainly presents characters, scenes, and situations highly attractive to artists of all these professions. The brilliant chorus in Donizetti's opera, "Per te d'immenso giubilo,"

addressed to the bride's brother, congratulates him on his sister's marriage with Bucklaw as a great advantage to the Ashton family. The token scene, where Ravenswood indignantly demands the pledge of his "egregious folly" from the half-unconscious bride, together with the love scene at the Mermaiden's Well, have been also beautifully expressed in Donizetti's pathetic opera. Thus the noble quartett with chorus, "Chi mi frena in tal momento," admirably represents, as far as musical expression can, the grand token scene. Throughout the opera Douglas Ashton, Lucy's elder brother, called Enrico, is substituted for her mother, who is omitted, while the Rev. Bide-the-Bent, more melodiously termed Raimondo, keeps the peace between Ravenswood, Douglas Ashton, and Bucklaw, called by the more melodious name of Arturo. In this musical composition some scenes and characters are altered or omitted, but the pathetic music, during the token scene especially, is sufficiently characteristic to recall this most attractive story to the memory of all musical readers.

As a play, this novel has not been so successful as the opera, notwithstanding its many dramatic characters and situations.[1] But the thrilling interest of this beautiful tragedy among all refined readers of sense and feeling will probably be permanent. In the real story, which Scott to a great extent carefully follows,[2] Edgar Ravenswood was a Lord Rutherford. This nobleman, Scott says, was an amiable, high-spirited young man, nobly born with very little fortune; perhaps, therefore, not unlike the hero of the novel. The end, however, of some of the chief persons in the story is entirely Scott's invention. Lord Rutherford's fate seems

[1] The present writer once saw this tragedy acted at the Lyceum Theatre, when managed by Mr. Fechter, who personated Ravenswood, but the performance was not apparently very popular. The three old hags were omitted; and I remember hearing from Mr. Charles Dickens that Fechter was right in omitting them, as they would be compared by the public to the witches in "Macbeth," yet they would perhaps have increased the dramatic interest of the representation.

[2] Introduction.

unknown, while Ravenswood is swallowed up in a quicksand when riding forth to fight a duel at an appointed place with Colonel Ashton. In the opera he commits suicide at hearing of Lucy's death from the clergyman Reimondo.

The furious interview between the intending duellists Ravenswood and Sir William Ashton is represented in a spirited duet in the opera, but this scene is rarely performed in England, though it probably is on the Continent. The fierce end of this duet, "O sole piu rapido," where each longs for the sunrise next day to witness their mortal combat, closely follows the spirit of Scott's imaginary scene, where Ravenswood and Douglas Ashton fix the time of their duel at sunrise the next morning. Ravenswood's devoted old servant Caleb Balderstone, in Scott's pathetic words,

> with a fidelity sometimes displayed by the canine race, but seldom by human beings, pined and died within a year after the catastrophe which we have narrated.

Scott finally states the mingled truth and fiction comprised in this attractive novel:

> Those who are read in the private family history of Scotland during the period in which the scene is laid, will readily discover through the disguise of borrowed names and added incidents the leading particulars of an OWER TRUE TALE.

A LEGEND OF MONTROSE

CHAPTER VI

A LEGEND OF MONTROSE

SCOTT'S interest in the Highlanders, and his pleasure in describing them, is more strikingly shown in this short story, perhaps, than in any other. The period is 1645–46; the hero and heroine, Lord Menteith and Annot Lyle, are rather uninteresting, and take very little part in the story.

The chief historical characters are the rival Scottish noblemen, the great Marquis of Montrose and the Marquis of Argyll. The latter was allied with the English Commonwealth, while Montrose was the champion of the unfortunate Charles I. The majority of the Scottish Lowlanders, however, being Presbyterians, were hostile to the Monarchy,

while most of the Highlanders—though many knew little about English politics—were disposed to join the King's standard. Among these brave, yet undisciplined warriors Montrose appeared, and soon acquired much the same surprising influence over them as his relative, Graham of Claverhouse, Lord Dundee, obtained in the subsequent reign of James II.

Upon this subject, so interesting as well as important in the pages of Scottish history, Macaulay observes[1]:

"Some writers have mentioned it as a proof of the extraordinary genius of Montrose and Dundee that those captains, though not themselves of Gaelic race or speech, should have been able to form and direct confederacies of Gaelic tribes. But it was in truth precisely because Montrose and Dundee were not Highlanders that they were able to lead armies composed of Highland clans. Had Montrose been chief of the Camerons, the Macdonalds would never have submitted to his authority. Had Dundee been chief of Clanronald, he would never have been obeyed by Glengarry. Haughty and punctilious men

[1] "History of England," chap. xiii.

who scarcely acknowledged the King to be their superior would not have endured the superiority of a neighbour, an equal, a competitor. They could far more easily bear the pre-eminence of a distinguished stranger. Yet even to such a stranger they would only allow a very limited and precarious authority. To bring a chief before a court-martial, to shoot him, to cashier him, to degrade him, to reprimand him publicly, was impossible. . . . Montrose, having passed rapidly from victory to victory, was, in the full career of success, suddenly abandoned by his followers. Local interests and local jealousies had brought his army together. Local jealousies and local interests dissolved it. . . . Dundee did not live long enough to experience a similar reverse of fortune, but there is every reason to believe that, had his life been prolonged one fortnight, his history would have been that of Montrose retold."

However this might have been, for some time the gallant Lowland Marquis of Montrose, commanding the Highlanders, was the terror of the Lowlands; for he certainly managed his Highland soldiers with remarkable skill and success. This story only gives a short sketch of his brilliant career at the outset, and leaves him in the midst of his triumphs.

The pleasure with which Scott describes the victories of the Highlanders surprises and perhaps irritates Macaulay, who, though himself bearing a Highland name, has little admiration for these mountaineers, and decidedly prefers the comparatively civilised Scottish Lowlanders. He observes that Scott, though of a Lowland family, describes with delighted pride the defeats of his own ancestors by fellow countrymen whom they regarded as little better than dangerous savages; and doubtless Scott views Montrose and Dundee, while commanding the victorious Highlanders, with far more admiration than did most of his fellow Lowlanders. Macaulay's historical mind suggests an important and interesting comparison between the feelings of Scottish and Irish during their civil wars. He writes:

"The Anglo-Saxon and the Celt have been reconciled in Scotland, and have never been reconciled in Ireland. In Scotland all the great actions of both races are thrown into a common stock and are considered as making up the glory which belongs to the whole country. So com-

pletely has the old antipathy been extinguished that nothing is more usual than to hear a Lowlander talk with complacency and even with pride of the most humiliating defeat that his ancestors ever underwent. It would be difficult to name any eminent man in whom national feeling and clannish feeling were stronger than in Sir Walter Scott. Yet when Sir Walter Scott mentioned Killiecranckie[1] he seemed utterly to forget that he was a Saxon. . . . His heart swelled with triumph when he related how his own kindred had fled like hares before a smaller number of warriors of a different breed and of a different tongue."

Scott admits and censures Montrose's cruel ravages among the Argyll tenantry, which he says was justly considered a blot upon the fame of the great Marquis; while he certainly interests his readers much more for him than for his enemy, Argyll.

He describes Argyll and the Campbells as in alliance with the majority of the Lowlanders and opposed to the majority of the Highlanders, and they certainly acquired at

[1] Dundee's great victory over the Lowlanders who were in arms for William III.

the end of the civil war the chief power in Scotland while allied with the English Republicans. Argyll's crafty, relentless character is a striking contrast to that of his noble relative so attractively described in "The Heart of Midlothian," and it may, perhaps, be doubted if the former's character is fairly described in this tale. Macaulay writes of this powerful nobleman [1]:

"The Marquis of Argyll was the head of a party as well as the head of a tribe. Possessed of two different kinds of authority, he used each of them in such a way as to extend and fortify the other. . . . Of all the Highland princes whose history is well known to us he was the greatest and the most dreaded. It was while his neighbours were watching the increase of his power with hatred which fear could scarcely keep down that Montrose called them to arms. The call was promptly obeyed. A powerful coalition of clans waged war, nominally for King Charles [I.] but really against McCallum More [Argyll]. It is not easy for any person who has studied the history of that contest to doubt that if Argyll had supported the cause

[1] "History of England," vol. iii.

of monarchy his neighbours would have declared against it. Grave writers tell of the victory gained at Inverlochy by the royalists over the rebels. But the peasantry who dwell near the spot speak more accurately. They talk of the great battle won there by the Macdonalds over the Campbells."

The most remarkable fictitious character in this story is the well-known soldier of fortune, Major Dalgetty. He perhaps slightly resembles Le Balafre [1] and the Baron of Bradwardine,[2] but he is quite distinct from either. He is a Protestant, his great hero being the Swedish King, Gustavus Adolphus, the Protestant champion, and under whom he had served with distinction. But his political principles seem uncertain, and Cavalier and Roundhead are much alike to him. In the subsequent civil war between James II. and William III. he would probably have joined the latter, from their common Protestantism. But in this civil strife between a Protestant King and Protestant Republicans of various denominations, Dalgetty seems to feel com-

[1] "Quentin Durward." [2] "Waverley."

paratively slight interest to what he felt in the previous foreign wars, which he is never weary of describing.

He, however, joins Montrose, whom he heartily admires, and by whom he is also much valued as a useful assistant in managing the Highlanders, for though pedantic and talkative to a great degree, he is a brave, shrewd, and experienced officer. Scott's well-known love for horses as well as for dogs is amusingly shown when Montrose presents a new steed to Dalgetty, which the latter names "Loyalty's Reward." Montrose, hearing this name and alluding, while unconsciously foreseeing his own fate, to the state of Scotland at the time, thus addresses Dalgetty:

"I hope you'll find Loyalty's Reward, since you call him so, practised in all the duties of the field —but I must just hint to you that at this time in Scotland loyalty is more frequently rewarded with a halter than with a horse."

Dalgetty then protests against the too common ill-usage of horses:[1]

[1] Chap. xx.

"His Excellency [Montrose] having the same intercourse with his horse during his exercise that he hath with his soldiers when training them, may form and break either to every feat of war which he chooses to practise, and accordingly this noble charger is admirably managed. But as it is the intercourse of private life that formeth the social character, so I do not apprehend that of the single soldier to be much polished by the conversation of the corporal or the sergeant, or that of Loyalty's Reward to have been much dulcified or ameliorated by the society of his Excellency's grooms, who bestow more oaths and kicks and thumps than kindness or caresses upon the animals intrusted to their charge, whereby many a generous quadruped, rendered as it were misanthropic, manifests, during the rest of his life, a greater desire to kick and bite his master than to love or to honour him."

"Spoken like an oracle," said Montrose. "Were there an academy for the education of horses to be annexed to the Mareschal College of Aberdeen, Sir Dugald Dalgetty alone should fill the chair."

Scott here makes young Lord Menteith, who is perhaps a little provoked by the pedantic, though brave Dalgetty, say aside to Montrose:

"Because being an ass there would be some distant relation between the professor and the students."

Some of Scott's critics compare this singular character to Shakespeare's Fluellen [1] and Ben Jonson's Captain Bobadil,[2] but Dalgetty bears little resemblance to the former, and scarcely any to the latter, who is described as a cowardly though witty boaster, while Dalgetty is brave as a lion throughout. The character of the fierce, half-mad Highlander, Allan M'Aulay, is striking and even terrible, and it is probable there may have been some Highlanders like him, considering their singular history and way of life at this time. Scott declares [3]:

"From the earliest period down to the union of the Crowns, the whole kingdom of Scotland, Lowlands as well as Highlands, had been the constant scene of war, foreign and domestic, and there was probably scarce one of its hardy inhabitants between the ages of sixteen and sixty, who was not as willing

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[1] "Henry the Fifth."

[2] Introduction; "Every Man in his Humour."

[3] Chap. xv.

in point of fact, as he was literally bound in law, to assume arms at the first call of his liege lord, or of a royal proclamation."

The story terminates rather abruptly, leaving Montrose in triumph among his Highland troops and Argyll defeated, though not vanquished, waiting his opportunity to revenge himself upon his gallant rival. This opportunity, indeed, arrived in the changing fortunes of war, and Argyll's vengeance was fearfully sated on the brave Marquis, who was hanged from a gallows thirty feet high,[1] and loaded with bitter reproaches and rebukes to the last by some of the opposite party. But Scott avoids describing his hero's misfortunes, and leaves him in the midst of his brief but glorious successes. This tale, though containing some beautiful descriptions of Highland scenery and a few striking characters, is not very interesting or enlivening. There are no amusing or witty characters from beginning to end, except Dalgetty, and though the hero and heroine are happily married, the reader

[1] Hume's History.

feels little interest about them. Montrose and Dalgetty are the two chief characters, by whom attraction and interest are alike absorbed; the former being described perhaps rather too favourably, while the latter is one of Scott's most original creations, though partly founded on a real personage.

THE PIRATE

CHAPTER VII

THE PIRATE

THE scene of this bright and original story is laid entirely in the islands of Orkney and Zetland, whither Scott once made a voyage, which he says inspired him with the idea of writing this book. The tale has two heroes and two heroines, of whom one couple end happily and the other are unfortunate. It opens with a picturesque description of the rocky sea-beaten Zetland coasts, which are described with such force and interest—Scott evidently liking the country—that the reader is pleased and even cheered by a description which many writers might have rendered gloomy and depressing.

The date of the story is probably about the beginning or middle of the eighteenth

century, though one of the chief characters—the old Zetland landlord—Magnus Troil, rightfully belongs, as the author admits, to a more remote period of history. He is a widower with two daughters: Minna, the romantic and serious, Brenda, the merry and lively heroines of the book. A reserved, silent stranger, named Basil Mertoun, and an only son, a handsome youth named Mordaunt, arrive in Zetland, and take up their abode in a gloomy old house belonging to Magnus Troil, nobody knowing anything about them or their past history.

Mr. Mertoun is a stern, unhappy man, with some secret sorrow apparently weighing on his mind. Yet Scott does not wish to make him an interesting character: he is cold and harsh even to his son, who is an amiable contrast to himself, and soon a great favourite with Magnus Troil and his daughters. The elder Mertoun is a thorough misanthropist, not in the sad relenting spirit of the "Black Dwarf," but in stern, sarcastic bitterness. But Magnus Troil is a joyous, hot-tempered old Zetlander,

not unlike Cedric in "Ivanhoe," always regretting that his country is ruled and inhabited by Scottish men, he himself being of old Norwegian descent and very proud of it. His half crazy kinswoman, Norna of the Fitful Head, is a singular character, somewhat resembling Meg Merrilies, though with many distinctive points. Yet Scott admits [1] that some readers thought there was too great a likeness between the Scottish gipsy and the Zetland prophetess.

Norna is described as partially insane, wandering constantly about Zetland, believing she can control, or at least influence, the winds and waves; and having completely imposed upon herself, she has also imposed upon many of the poor Zetlanders, who view her with fear and respect. She is friendly to young Mordaunt Mertoun, and much attached to the Troil sisters, especially to Minna, whose serious romantic character inclines her to Norna's gloomy society, which is by no means so agreeable to her younger sister, Brenda.

[1] Preface.

Scott, though writing about Zetland and its people with evident interest and pleasure, yet forcibly describes an odious habit among some of these selfish islanders, in refusing assistance to shipwrecked victims on their coast, partly from superstition, and partly from hopes of obtaining whatever property belonging to them might be thrown ashore. He even mentions a prayer used among them for heaven

"to send more wrecks ere winter"

—more fit for offering to some heathen deity than to the Creator of man. Several of the poorer Zetlanders, such as Bryce Snailsfoot, the roguish pedlar, old Swertha, the maid-servant, &c., are adduced as specimens of these superstitious, heartless islanders, whom nevertheless Scott describes in a good-humoured style, making them more amusing and less odious than they would probably have been in real life.

The conceited Scottish factor, Yellowley, and his shrewish sister Baby, who settle in Zetland,

trying to introduce Scottish ideas and improvements, are among the most amusing characters in the book, especially when first mentioned during a terrific storm, when unwillingly giving temporary shelter to old Norna, Mordaunt Mertoun, and the pedlar Bryce. This lively scene displays all these different characters with great force and humour :

Mistress Baby gave vent to her fears in loud exclamations of "The Lord guide us—this is surely the last day—what kind of a country of guisards and gyrecarlines is this ! And you, ye fool carle," she added, turning on her brother (for all her passions had a touch of acidity in them), "to quit the bonny Mearns land to come here, where there is naething but sturdy beggars and gaberlunzies within ane's house, and Heaven's anger on the outside on't."

"I tell you, sister Baby," answered the insulted agriculturist, "that all shall be reformed and amended—excepting," he added, betwixt his teeth, "the scaulding humours of an ill-natured jaud, that can add bitterness to the very storm."

The old domestic and the pedlar meanwhile exhausted themselves in entreaties to Norna to leave the house, of which, as they were couched in the Norse language, the master of the house understood nothing.

She listened to them with a haughty and unmoved air, and replied at length aloud and in English, "I will not. What if this house be strewed in ruins before morning—where would be the world's want in the crazed projector and the niggardly pinch-commons by which it is inhabited? They will needs come to reform Zetland customs; let them try how they like a Zetland storm."

Although Norna is consistent throughout, she is an improbable, if not unnatural character. In her description, Scott evidently had only his powerful imagination to rely on, whereas in the somewhat similar characters of Meg Merrilies, Magdalen Graeme,[1] and Ulrica,[2] he may have had some historic foundations. But Norna seems nearly as imaginary, though not so poetical, as the White Lady of Avenel,[3] and hardly suited to the time in which she is supposed to live.

The pirate hero himself is rescued from his shipwrecked vessel by the brave exertions of Mordaunt Mertoun, with the assistance of

[1] "The Abbot." [2] "Ivanhoe."
[3] "The Monastery."

Norna and Snailsfoot, the latter being forced to help in the recovery of the half-drowned man, though longing to rob him while unconscious and leave him to the waves. In this design, however, he is prevented by the threatened curse of Norna, which even this sharp pedlar fears may

"injure his trade through the isles."

When the pirate recovers he calls himself Captain Cleveland, states that he is the sole survivor of the crew of the *Revenge*, which had been wrecked on a promontory called the Sumburgh Head, but gives little further account of himself. He is handsome and young, rather blunt in manner; nor is he sufficiently grateful to his gallant rescuer, Mordaunt, although presenting him with a handsome foreign gun in requital. This weapon, with some money, clothes, and pistols, are saved from the plundering Zetlanders by the influence of Norna and restored to Cleveland. This adventurer soon knows the Troil family, and there ensues

a mutual attachment between him and Minna, while Brenda prefers Mordaunt. Why this comfortable arrangement could not have lasted to the satisfaction of all parties concerned is not very clearly told, but, partly through the gossip of the sly pedlar Bryce, and partly through Cleveland's selfish jealousy, Magnus Troil and Minna are soon prejudiced against Mordaunt, while Brenda is much under their control. Norna, who, though living a solitary life, loves this family, with whom she is distantly related, and who gets information about everything in Zetland, warns Mordaunt not to let himself be supplanted by this doubtful stranger. Mordaunt accordingly goes uninvited to a somewhat boisterous entertainment at old Magnus Troil's, and finds Cleveland the honoured guest, in high favour with the company, while paying marked attentions to Minna Troil, who seems much captivated by him. This intimacy greatly astonishes Mordaunt, owing to the vast contrast between the imaginative, refined Minna and the bold, free-and-easy, even rough Captain Cleveland.

Upon the subject of people often liking, if not loving, their contrasts, Scott makes some philosophical remarks, rather delaying the course of the story, which he rarely does:

> For what a world were it if only the wise were to intermarry with the wise, the learned with the learned, the amiable with the amiable, nay, even the handsome with the handsome? and is it not evident that the degraded castes of the foolish, the ignorant, the brutal, and the deformed (comprehending by very far the greater portion of mankind), must, when condemned to exclusive intercourse with each other, become gradually as much brutalised in person and disposition as a party of ourang-outangs?[1]

Mordaunt vainly tries to discover what unintentional offence he has given to the Troils, though Cleveland is still friendly towards him, at least in manner. Scott here introduces a Zetland poet, or lover of poetry, a certain whimsical old man, Claud Halcro, not a very amusing or interesting guest of Magnus Troil, who is constantly praising and repeating Dryden's verses. He sadly bores both the

[1] Chap. xiii.

young men, Cleveland and Mordaunt, on one occasion,[1] mentioning Tim Thimblethwaite, a former friend of his own, who had:

"lent John [Dryden] money to boot out of his own pocket at a time when all his (Dryden's) fine court friends blew cold enough. He trusted me too, and I have been two months on the score at a time for my upper room. To be sure, I was obliging in his way —not that I could exactly shape or sew, nor would that have been decorous for a gentleman of good descent; but I—eh, eh—I drew bills—summed up the books——"

"Carried home the clothes of the wits and aldermen, and got lodgings for your labour," interrupted Cleveland.

"No, no—d——n it, no," replied Halcro, "no such thing—you put me out in my story—where was I?"

"Nay, the devil help you to the latitude," said the Captain, extricating his button from the gripe of the unmerciful bard's finger and thumb; "for I have no time to take an observation." So saying, he bolted from the room.

"A silly, ill-bred, conceited fool," said Halcro, looking after him, "with as little wit as manners in his empty coxcomb. I wonder what Magnus and these

[1] Chap. xii.

silly wenches can see in him—he tells such damnable long stories, too, about his adventures and sea-fights—every second word a lie, I doubt not. Mordaunt, my dear boy, take example by that man—that is, take warning by him—never tell long stories about yourself. You are sometimes given to talk too much about your own exploits on crags and skerries and the like, which only breaks conversation and prevents other folk from being heard. Now I see you are impatient to hear out what I was saying. Stop, where was I?"

"I fear we must put it off, Mr. Halcro, until after dinner," said Mordaunt, who also meditated his escape, though desirous of effecting it with more delicacy towards his old acquaintance than Captain Cleveland had thought it necessary to use.

Halcro's admiration for Dryden seems rather unlikely among the inhabitants of Orkney and Zetland, as has been remarked,[1] but Halcro evidently amuses Scott himself, who introduces him as nearly always quoting Dryden, though he takes little part in the story.

The singular festivities at Magnus Troil's, and the spirited description of the whale fishing, occupy the middle of the story, in which most

[1] Shaw's "Manual of English Literature."

of the characters are brought together, while Mordaunt remains out of favour without knowing why, and Cleveland is equally admired by host and company. The Scottish factor, Yellowley, vainly tries to recommend Scottish farming and Scottish ways to Magnus Troil, who is as obstinately attached to old customs as the other is conceited and forward in advocating new ones. Cleveland, however, is much more inclined to quarrel with Mordaunt than seems natural, considering his reciprocated love for Minna and Mordaunt's equally reciprocated love for Brenda. In the midst of these festivities and half-suppressed disputes the cunning pedlar, Bryce, comes, bringing news of a strange ship just arrived at Kirkwall, no one knowing exactly to what country she belongs. As Bryce himself saw the vessel and some of the crew, Cleveland recognises, from his description, a consort of his own lost ship, and resolves to go to Kirkwall and see his former comrades. Meanwhile, Norna reveals, to the interest of Minna and terror of Brenda, part of her own sad history —that she had married young and been

deserted by her husband, and, moreover, had been the unintentional cause of her own father's death.

This strange revelation is made at night, and seems to explain the cause of her deranged mind ever after. After this scene the sisters have a remarkable conversation together, in which Minna admits her love for Cleveland, whose daring adventures, as he narrates them, recall to her romantic, fanciful mind the naval exploits of her own remote ancestors, who called themselves sea-kings, and whose deeds, though not recorded in regular history, had been transmitted through old legends and verses to her from childhood, and chiefly by Norna herself. Leading a most secluded life, it is not perhaps improbable that Minna should have been thus mistaken in her admirer; but it is doubtful indeed, if not impossible, that there ever was, or could be, a pirate with so many good qualities as Cleveland. Of all violators of laws—divine and human—pirates have always been among the most desperate, unscrupulous, and least deserving of pity. Yet a pirate's wild life seems to have some attraction,

even for the grave and serious historian, Mr. Hallam, who writes:

"A pirate, in a well-armed, quick-sailing vessel, must feel, I suppose, the enjoyments of his exemption from control more exquisitely than any other freebooter, and, darting along the bosom of the ocean, under the impartial radiance of the heavens, may deride the dark concealments and hurried flights of the forest robber. This occupation is, indeed, extinguished by the civilisation of later ages, or confined to distant climates." [1]

Every civilised nation has enacted and enforced most severe laws against them, and in the course of history, while penalties for most offences, moral and political, have been generally mitigated, those against these desperate men have remained unchanged. Cleveland, before leaving Zetland for Orkney, to some extent reveals to Minna his real profession, watching the effect he produces, and, of course, withholding a good deal about it. Minna, inspired by romantic fancy and utterly ignorant about

[1] "Middle Ages," vol. iii.

real pirates, urges him to rejoin his comrades and distinguish himself[1]:

Cleveland gazed at her as she spoke with a degree of wondering admiration in which, at the same time, there lurked a smile at her simplicity.

"I could not," he said, "have believed that such high courage could have been found united with such ignorance of the world, as the world is now wielded. For my manners, they who know me will readily allow that I have done my best, even at the risk of my popularity, and of my life itself, to mitigate the ferocity of my mates; but how can you teach humanity to men burning with vengeance against the world by whom they are proscribed?"

Scott then describes Cleveland confessing gradually more and more of his profession, till at length Minna, slowly becoming "sadder and wiser," exclaims:

"I am uncertain whether you had been thus candid had you not known that I should soon see your comrades and discover from their conversation and manners what you would otherwise gladly have concealed."

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[1] Chap. xxii.

He replies :

"You do me injustice, Minna, cruel injustice. From the instant you knew me to be a sailor of fortune, an adventurer, a buccaneer, or, if you will have the broad word, A PIRATE, what had you to expect less than what I have told you ?"

"You speak too truly," said Minna ; "all this I might have anticipated, and I know not how I should have expected it otherwise."

She then proceeds to reveal her own enthusiastic nature, and a mind completely engrossed by remote history, and therefore strangely ignorant about her own times. It seems, indeed, almost if not quite impossible that such a person as Minna Troil could ever have lived except perhaps in very remote times, and yet be so endowed with the refinement of modern education and enlightenment. But Scott, having conceived such a character, describes it with an interest and a charm probably pleasing alike to himself and to his readers. Minna proceeds, revealing yet more of her enthusiastic, ignorant fancies :

". . . It seemed to me that a war on the cruel and superstitious Spaniards had in it something ennobling —something that refined the fierce employment to which you have just now given its true and dreaded name. I thought that the independent warriors of the Western Ocean, raised up as it were to punish the wrongs of so many murdered and plundered tribes, must have had something of gallant devotion, like that of the Sons of the North whose long galleys avenged on so many coasts the oppressions of degenerate Rome. This I thought and this I dreamed —I grieve that I am awakened and undeceived. Yet I blame you not for the erring of my own fancy. Farewell; we must now part."

"Say, at least," said Cleveland, "that you do not hold me in horror for having told you the truth."

"I must have time for reflection," said Minna; "time to weigh what you have said, ere I can fully understand my own feelings. Thus much, however, I can say even now, that he who pursues the wicked purpose of plunder, by means of blood and cruelty . . . is not and cannot be the lover whom Minna Troil expected to find in Cleveland, and if she still love him it must be as a penitent and not as a hero."

She departs, and Cleveland, looking after her, exclaims to himself in mingled surprise, disappointment, and admiration:

"She is gone; wild and fanciful as she is, I expected not this. She startled not at the name of my perilous course of life, yet seemed totally unprepared for the evil which must necessarily attend it, and so all the merit I have gained by my resemblance to a Norse champion or King of the Sea is to be lost at once, because a gang of pirates do not prove to be a choir of saints. . . . Well, if Fortune would but stand my friend with this beautiful enthusiast, I would pursue her wheel no further at sea, but set myself down amongst these rocks as happy as if they were so many groves of bananas and palmettoes."

With these and such thoughts, half rolling in his bosom, half expressed in indistinct hints and murmurs, the pirate Cleveland returned to the mansion of Burgh-Westra."

Soon after this interesting scene Cleveland and Mordaunt encounter each other, late in the evening, when the former is singing love-songs under the windows of Minna and Brenda. The last is in beautiful words, expressing the contrast between his peaceful life at Magnus Troil's hospitable Zetland home and the terrible scenes of his pirate's career, which he now expects to soon resume, at least for a time, though longing to detach himself from it.

"Farewell! farewell! the voice you hear
Has left its last soft tone with you,
Its next must join the seaward cheer,
And shout among the shouting crew.

The accents which I scarce could form
Beneath your frown's controlling check,
Must give the word, above the storm,
To cut the mast and clear the wreck.

The timid eye I dared not raise—
The hand that shook when pressed to thine,
Must point the guns upon the chase—
Must bid the deadly cutlass shine.

To all I love or hope or fear,
Honour or own, a long adieu!
To all that life has soft and dear,
Farewell! save memory of you!"

Cleveland wounds Mordaunt, who is unarmed, and Minna is terrified next morning at seeing marks of blood near the spot; her sister, who remains asleep, knows and suspects nothing; but though Minna does not reveal her fears, they prey so incessantly on her

sensitive mind as to injure her health. Meanwhile, both Cleveland and Mordaunt disappear, the former going to Kirkwall, while the latter is secretly borne off and nursed by Norna. Magnus Troil, alarmed at his daughter's depression, consults Norna, who in a remarkable scene fastens a charm round Minna's neck, and while doing so reveals to her, in hasty and vague hints which few understand, that Cleveland and Mordaunt are neither of them slain, after which news Minna rapidly recovers.

Meantime the elder Mertoun hears that only Norna can tell him about his lost son, and accordingly has a singular interview with her in a solitary churchyard. Here Norna, evidently knowing his real name and history, though he seems to have forgotten her, tells him that at Kirkwall he will hear news of his son.

The scene then changes to Orkney, where Cleveland rejoins the crew of his lost vessel's consort and is moodily consulting his chief adherent, Bunce, an amusing stage-struck

amateur pirate, who persists in styling himself Frederick Altamont. He is a brave, lively, good-hearted fellow and sincerely attached to Cleveland. At Kirkwall Cleveland inflicts a well-deserved beating on the rogue, Bryce Snailsfoot, whom he and Bunce meet at Kirkwall Fair, where the pedlar is actually selling some of Cleveland's clothes and other property, which the latter recognises and demands. Bryce, however, cunningly keeps him waiting with false excuses while he secretly sends for the constables, hoping that Cleveland may lose temper and break the peace, so that he may continue selling the stolen goods. He is the more confident in his roguery as all these pirates are suspected and disliked by the Kirkwall people from their insolent conduct and language whenever they land. However, Cleveland, losing temper a little too soon, has time to bestow some heavy blows on Snailsfoot, when the constables interrupt the assault by arresting Cleveland, and amid the applause of the Kirkwall inhabitants drag him off towards the jail, while Bunce makes his escape to the

shore. Here he summons some of the pirates to the rescue of their young captain, which they speedily accomplish and bear him away in triumph to their ship. This daring rescue, though briefly described, is for its length the most spirited incident in the whole book. The scene appears really to pass before the eyes of the reader, as if most graphically described by a recent eye-witness :

They [the pirates] now appeared on the scene —fierce desperadoes, as became their calling—with features bronzed by the tropical sun under which they had pursued it. They rushed at once among the crowd, laying about them with their stretchers, and, forcing their way up to Cleveland, speedily delivered him from the hands of the officers, who were totally unprepared to resist an attack so furious and so sudden, and carried him off in triumph towards the quay, two or three of their number facing about from time to time to keep back the crowd, whose efforts to recover the prisoner were the less violent that most of the seamen were armed with cutlasses and pistols. They gained their boat in safety and jumped into it, carrying along with them Cleveland, to whom circumstances seemed to offer no other refuge, and pushed off for their vessel, singing in chorus to their oars an old ditty, of

which the natives of Kirkwall could only hear the first stanza :

"Robin Rover said to his crew,
'Up with the black flag,
Down with the blue ;
Fire on the main top,
Fire on the bow ;
Fire on the gun deck,
Fire down below.'" [1]

It is difficult to help feeling relief at Cleveland's rescue, even by such desperate associates, yet Scott has no idea of making real pirates attractive. In their conference Cleveland and Bunce are complete contrasts to all around, being evidently ideal characters, while the rest are only too natural and precisely what might be expected from their habits and way of life.

Cleveland and Bunce appear utterly unfitted for their imaginary positions, for two such pirates surely never existed at any time or in any country. With these two fanciful, pleasing characters Scott likes to amuse himself and his

[1] Chap. xxxii.

readers; but to prove that he knows thoroughly what the real pirate article is, he soon introduces some genuine and thoroughly natural ruffians, Goffe, Hawkins, and Derrick, whose conduct and language are probably founded on evidence derived from the actual records and trials of similar desperadoes.

Captain Goffe is Cleveland's rival, the older pirates preferring him, while the younger set, headed by Bunce, incline to Cleveland. Goffe is said to be "a sketch of consummate merit,"[1] and so he probably is, of the pirate crew; but whether even among them he would have been chosen as leader or have been fit for the post seems doubtful enough. He is a surly, drunken ruffian, with a certain amount of low cunning, but apparently not possessing a single quality to raise him above his comrades. Even the boatswain, Hawkins, though a coarse, swearing ruffian, seems to have rather more sense than his commander.

The scene on the pirate vessel after Cleveland's rescue, when the rival captains confront

[1] Shaw, "English Literature."

each other, surrounded by their respective adherents, though not very pleasing, is one of the most spirited and natural in the whole book. Though Scott wittily apologises for here introducing the language of low ruffians, he well knows how to describe them. His account of these "water thieves" is as repulsive, though not so detailed, as that of Dickens when describing his "land thieves" in "Oliver Twist."[1] Dickens may not, perhaps, have read this novel, or he would hardly have declared that "except in Hogarth" he had never met in books with actual thieves. The scene on the pirate vessel that Scott here describes[2] seems as natural as if told him by a hearer or by an eye-witness. But the odious, repulsive language of Goffe and other pirates in-

[1] In Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" Shylock the Jew, when recalling all possible risks he may incur by lending money, says, "But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land rats and water rats, land thieves and water thieves—I mean pirates" (Act i.).

[2] Chap. xxxiv.

duces Scott to write, as if in apology for introducing it:

. . . We may take notice that it was the gracious custom of this commander to mix his words and oaths in nearly equal proportions, which he was wont to call *shotting* his discourse. As we delight not, however, in the discharge of such artillery, we shall only indicate by a space like this —— the places in which these expletives occurred, and thus, if the reader will pardon a very poor pun, we will reduce Captain Goffe's volley of sharp shot into an explosion of blank cartridges. To his insinuations that he was come on board to assume the chief command, Cleveland replied that he neither desired nor would accept any such promotion, but would only ask Captain Goffe for a cast of the boat, to put him ashore in one of the other islands, as he had no wish either to command Goffe or to remain in a vessel under his orders.

". . . By G——, I think you are both mad!" said Hawkins, the boatswain. "A meeting with sword and pistol may be devilish good fun in its way, when no better is to be had; but who the devil that had common sense, amongst a set of gentlemen in our condition, would fall a-quarrelling with each other to let these duck-winged, web-footed islanders have a chance of knocking us all upon the head?"

"Well said, old Hawkins," said Derrick, the quartermaster, who was an officer of very considerable importance among these rovers. "I say, if the two captains won't agree to live together quietly and club both heart and hand to defend the vessel, why, d——n me, depose them both, say I, and choose another in their stead."

"Meaning yourself, I suppose, Master Quartermaster," said Jack Bunce; "but that cock won't fight. . . ."

"I have no quarrel with any one," said Goffe sullenly. "Captain Cleveland has wandered about among the islands here amusing himself, and we have wasted our time and property in waiting for him, when we might have been adding twenty or thirty thousand dollars to the stock-purse. However, if it pleases the rest of the gentlemen-adventurers—why, I shall not grumble about it." . . .

When they began their consultation the friends of Goffe remarked, to their great displeasure . . . that in endeavouring to drown his mortification at the sudden appearance of Cleveland and the reception he met with from the crew, the elder Captain had not been able to do so without overflowing his reason at the same time. His natural sullen taciturnity had prevented this from being observed until the council began its deliberations, when it proved impossible to hide it.

The first person who spoke was Cleveland, who said that, so far from wishing to command the vessel,

he desired no favour at any one's hand except to land him upon some island or holm at a distance from Kirkwall and leave him to shift for himself. The boatswain remonstrated strongly against this resolution.

"The lads," he said, "all knew Cleveland, and could trust his seamanship as well as his courage; besides, he never let the grog get quite uppermost and was always in proper trim, either to sail the ship or to fight the ship, whereby she was never without some one to keep her course when he was on board. And as for the noble Captain Goffe," continued the mediator, "he has as stout a heart as ever broke biscuit, and that I will uphold him; but then, when he has his grog aboard—I speak to his face—he is so d——d funny with his cranks and his jests that there is no living with him. You all remember how nigh he had run the ship on that cursed Horse of Copinsha, as they call it, just by way of frolic; and then you know how he fired off his pistol under the table when we were at the great council and shot Jack Jenkins in the knee, and cost the poor devil his leg with his pleasantry."[1]

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[1] Scott says: "This was really an exploit of the celebrated Avery, the pirate, who suddenly, without provocation, fired his pistols under the table where he sat drinking with his messmates, wounded one man severely and thought the matter a good jest. What is still more extraordinary, his crew regarded it in the same light."

"Jack Jenkins was not a chip the worse," said the carpenter. "I took the leg off with my saw as well as any loblolly-boy in the land could have done—heated my broad axe and seared the stump —ay, by ——! and made a jury-leg that he shambles about with as well as ever he did, for Jack could never cut a feather."[1]

"You are a clever fellow, carpenter," replied the boatswain, "a d——d clever fellow! but I had rather you tried your saw and red-hot axe upon the ship's timbers than on mine, sink me! But that here is not the case. The question is if we shall part with Captain Cleveland here, who is a man of thought and action, whereby it is my belief it would be heaving the pilot overboard when the gale is blowing on a lee-shore. Our water is well-nigh out, and we have junketed till provisions are low with us. We cannot sail without provisions—we cannot get provisions without the good-will of the Kirkwall folks. If we remain here longer the *Halcyon* frigate will be down upon us—she was seen off Peterhead two days since—and we shall hang up at the yard-arm to be sun-dried. Now, Captain Cleveland will get us out of the hobble, if any can. He can play the gentleman with these Kirkwall folks, and knows how to deal with

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[1] "A ship going fast through the sea is said to cut a feather, alluding to the ripple which she throws off from her bows."

them on fair terms, and foul too, if there be occasion for it."

"And so you would turn honest Captain Goffe a-grazing, would ye?" said an old weather-beaten pirate, who had but one eye; "what though he has his humours, and made my eye dowse the glim in his fancies and frolics, he is as honest a man as ever walked a quarter-deck, for all that, and d——n me, but I stand by him so long as t'other lantern is lit!"

"Why, you would not hear me out," said Hawkins; "a man might as well talk to so many negers! I tell you, I propose that Cleveland shall only be captain from one, *post meridiem*, to five *a.m.*, during which time Goffe is always drunk."

The Captain of whom he last spoke gave sufficient proof of the truth of his words by uttering an inarticulate growl and attempting to present a pistol at the mediator Hawkins.

"Why, look ye now," said Derrick, "there is all the sense he has, to get drunk on council day, like one of these poor silly fellows!"

"Ay," said Bunce, "drunk as Davy's sow, in the face of the field, the fray, and the senate!"

"But nevertheless," continued Derrick, "it will never do to have two captains in the same day. I think week about might suit better—and let Cleveland take the first turn."

The matter was now put to the vote; and so confident were the crew in Cleveland's superior

address and management, that the temporary deposition of Goffe found little resistance even among his own partisans.

It seems impossible that men possessing the high qualities of Cleveland and Bunce could have lived among such comrades or exercised the least authority over them. A certain Dick Fletcher, however, is a slight improvement on his comrades, and as devoted to Bunce as the latter is to Cleveland, and even he seems out of place among such desperate villains as the rest. Scott evidently wishes both Cleveland and Bunce to interest his readers, and yet to be pirates, as it were, by chance; but he is equally resolved not to make a pirate's life the least attractive even to the most excitable of youths. Some gifted authors without his sound sense and morality would have described this pirate crew as brave, dashing, agreeable fellows, perhaps a little careless about the rights of property, yet still highly attractive and romantic; but Scott has no such idea of violating truth. Cleveland

and Bunce are his own pure inventions, and he has a perfect right to represent them as he pleases, and he certainly succeeds in making them utterly unlike their associates, whose repulsive conduct and language are described, though briefly, yet as plainly and naturally as if derived from some police report.

A private council is held among the pirates, anxious to obtain provisions from the Kirkwall people, who are suspicious, and averse to having any intercourse with such doubtful customers. It is now stated also that an English ship, the *Halcyon*, Captain Weatherport, is fast approaching the Orkneys, and it is absolutely necessary to lay in supplies on board the pirate vessel before she can take to flight. For this purpose Cleveland again goes to Kirkwall with Goffe, and remains three days as a hostage, while the Kirkwall folks pitch upon the luckless Scottish factor, Yellowley, as a fit hostage to return with Goffe to the pirate vessel. This is a very amusing scene, ending in Goffe slyly releasing the terrified Yellowley, and immediately

trying to supplant Cleveland among his associates.

The troubles of Triptolemus Yellowley, evidently an enterprising Scottish man among the ignorant Zetlanders, he himself amusingly relates to Cleveland, whom he meets at Kirkwall, and had previously known when a guest with him at the hospitable home of Magnus Troil. When Cleveland asks this poor disappointed agriculturist if his bees, which he had brought to Zetland, are thriving, Triptolemus has to reply :

"Thrive! they thrive like everything else in this country, and that's in the backward way."

"Want of care, I suppose?" said Cleveland.

"The contrary, sir, quite the contrary," replied the factor; "they died of ower muckle care, like Lucky Christie's chickens. I asked to see the skeps, and cunning and joyful did the fallow look who was to have taken care of them. 'Had there been anybody in charge but mysell,' he said, 'ye might have seen the skeps or whatever ye ca' them; but there wad hae been as mony solan geese as flees in them, if it hadna been for my four quarters; for I watched them so closely, that I saw them a' creeping out at the little holes one sunny morning,

and if I had not stopped the leak on the instant with a bit clay, the deil a bee, or flee, or whatever they are, would have been left in the skeps, as ye ca' them!' In a word, sir, he had clagged up the hives, as if the puir things had had the pestilence, and my bees were as dead as if they had been smeaked."

Cleveland then asks:

"How does the orchard thrive?"

"Oh, Captain, this same Solomon of the Orcadian Ophir—I say this wise man had watered the young apple-trees, in his great tenderness, with hot water, and they are perished, root and branch."[1]

Magnus Troil, his daughters and Halcro, are captured in a boat by Bunce, Fletcher, and other pirates, and though these gentry behave with some degree of civility, they yet fall fearfully short of the romantic sea-kings of poor Minna's powerful imagination. She hears, however, of Cleveland's danger in Kirkwall, and being released with her sister, she hastens thither, while Bunce retains her father as hostage for Cleveland's safety. The meeting

[1] Chap. xxxv.

between Bunce and Halcro, two stage-struck oddities, amateur poet and amateur pirate, is clever and amusing, though both seem placed in an almost impossible situation. Bunce, it seems, had met Halcro in former times, under very different circumstances, theatrical and peaceful, and he exclaims at recognition:

"Why, you are the little fellow that played the fiddle to old manager Gadabout's company. . . . I thought I knew your catchword of Glorious John."[1]

Scott adds:

At another time this recognition might not have been very grateful to Halcro's minstrel pride; but as matters stood with him the discovery of a golden mine could not have made him more happy. He instantly remembered the very hopeful young performer who came out in Don Sebastian, and judiciously added that the muse of glorious John Dryden had never received such excellent support during the time that he was first (he might have added, and only) violin to Mr. Gadabout's company. . . .

Bunce, or Altamont, wrung his hand tenderly.

[1] Chap. xxxvi.

"Ah, you flatter me, my dear friend," he said, "yet why had not the public some of your judgment? I should not then have been at this pass. Heaven knows, my dear Mr. Halcro—Heaven knows with what pleasure I could keep you on board with me . . . how delightful it would be in a tropic night, when the ship was hanging on the breeze, with a broad and steady sail, for me to rehearse Alexander, with you for my pit, box, and gallery! Nay (for you are a follower of the Muses, as I remember), who knows but you and I might be the means of inspiring, like Orpheus and Eurydice, a pure taste into our companions, and softening their manners while we excited their better feelings?"

This was spoken with so much unction that Claud Halcro began to be afraid he had both made the actual punch over-potent, and mixed too many bewitching ingredients in the cup of flattery which he had administered; and that, under the influence of both potions, the sentimental pirate might detain him by force, merely to realise the scenes which his imagination presented.

Minna soon has an interview with Cleveland in the Kirkwall prison, and finding she cannot procure his release in exchange for her father, entreats Cleveland to muffle himself in her cloak and escape while she remains in his place.

At this moment Norna, who is almost as mysterious and potent as a fairy queen, appears, and forbidding Cleveland and Minna ever to meet again, ridicules Minna's plan of disguising Cleveland, but engages to deliver him herself, which she does, and Minna departs. Norna secretly conducts Cleveland from the prison, and has a long interview with him, vainly trying to make him abandon all thoughts of marrying Minna, whom she wishes to wed her favourite, Mordaunt Mertoun, now recovered by her care from the wounds inflicted by Cleveland. When the latter rejoins his wild associates, he finds them busily engaged trying to lay in stores for their coming voyage, which they find hard to obtain from the distrustful people of Kirkwall, and they long to be off as soon as possible, dreading the expected arrival of the *Halcyon*. Cleveland, however, resolves to see Minna again before leaving these islands, and has a last interview with her near Kirkwall.

Mordaunt Mertoun now reappears, commanding some soldiers or sentinels to defend Kirk-

wall from any attack of the pirates, and is horrified at hearing from Brenda of the intended meeting between her sister and Cleveland. He resolves, however, to permit it without attempting to arrest Cleveland, which he at first desired. Meanwhile Bunce forms a plan, which in real life would have been an utter absurdity, to accompany Cleveland with a band of pirates, wait patiently till their conversation is over, and then carry them both off by force to the pirate vessel. Cleveland is ignorant of this friendly plot, and while parting from Minna, Bunce and his followers rush upon them, while about the same time Mordaunt Mertoun and his soldiers appear, and a strange scuffle ensues, in which Cleveland shoots one of his followers, and he is captured with Bunce and Fletcher, and lodged in Kirkwall jail, where Fletcher dies of his wounds, and Cleveland and Bunce are left alone together. They soon perceive from their prison window the arrival of the *Halcyon*, which immediately gives chase to the pirate vessel. A desperate sea fight ensues, which Scott describes, however, very

briefly, though he might have made much more of it. But he is apparently embarrassed at the close of this story by having placed imaginary pirates in an interesting situation, while resolved that his readers shall feel no sympathy for those who really represent so dangerous a class. Instead, therefore, of making Cleveland and Bunce die bravely defending their vessel, he suffers them merely to witness her destruction from their prison, and then brings them, together with the captured crew, before Captain Weatherport and the Kirkwall magistrates.

Meanwhile the elder Mertoun has had another interview with Norna, revealing to her that Cleveland is their son, instead of Mordaunt, as Norna had hitherto believed. This secret marriage between Mertoun and Norna is only obscurely hinted at till this interview, when Mertoun confesses that, after deserting her, he married a Spaniard, by whom he had young Mordaunt, but whose faithless character made him doubt if Mordaunt was really his son. Mertoun, whose real name is Vaughan, hints

that he killed either this woman or her paramour, and had to fly from America in consequence. He then became a pirate himself, and involved his elder son, Clement Cleveland or Vaughan, in the same desperate career. Norna, who had previously sent to Captain Weatherport to hasten his pursuit of the pirate vessel, now believes that she has either caused or hastened the probable execution of her unknown son, and, overcome by this idea, faints away, while Vaughan rushes off to try and save the unfortunate pirate.

He finds Cleveland and his associates before Captain Weatherport and the Provost of Kirkwall, and confessing his real name of Basil Vaughan, entreats that he, the old pirate, may suffer in place of the young one. Captain Weatherport, however, assures him that his own life is now safe "under two proclamations of mercy," and on referring to some valuable papers, finds that Cleveland and Bunce had on one fortunate occasion saved the daughters of a Spanish nobleman from the brutality of their followers. This one good action had caused

special intercession to be made by this Spanish gentleman, the Governor of Quempoa, to save the lives of these two in the probable event of their future capture.

Thus, while the rest of the pirates are sent to London to be tried and probably executed, as is clearly hinted, Cleveland and Bunce enter the British Navy and sail for the West Indies under Captain Weatherport, who thinks he can turn their knowledge of these coasts and seas to the public service. Cleveland is killed some years after, while Minna dies unmarried. She specially devoted herself to the care of Norna, whose insane delusions are made gradually to yield to religious thoughts and convictions. Mertoun, *alias* Vaughan, is supposed to enter a foreign convent, while Mordaunt and Brenda marry, and live happily. It has been said that the famous story of Robinson Crusoe has inclined some boys to become sailors, or at least greatly increased a natural fancy for the naval profession. Also that the tale of Jack Sheppard has inclined many idle or excitable youths to acts of robbery. But cer-

tainly Scott's "Pirate" could never incline any one to admire, or even extenuate, a life of piracy.

The pirate hero himself is constantly regretting his sad fate in living among such hateful associates, who have, indeed, nothing in common, except courage, with him or with Bunce. That Scott might have made his story more interesting by causing Cleveland to die defending his ship is probable, but such a fate might have had no good effect among some of his younger readers. For there is nothing more dangerous to the public interest than when able writers attempt to make criminals attractive, or even interesting as such. This dangerous mistake is eloquently censured by Charles Dickens, who takes such special care that *his* thieves should attract no one, but, on the contrary, be represented in their true nature.[1]

[1] "I had read of thieves by scores — seductive fellows (amiable for the most part), faultless in dress, plump in pocket, choice in horseflesh, bold in bearing, fortunate in gallantry, great at a song, a bottle, a pack of cards, or dice-box, and fit companions for the bravest. But I have never met (except in

Though Scott draws a pirate hero, he carefully distinguishes him throughout from his savage associates in feeling and sentiment, finally making him witness their capture with little sympathy, and even serve loyally under the same officer who effects it.

Thus terminates this remarkable and original story, the scene being laid so entirely in the Orkney and Zetland Isles, among pirates, whale fishing, sea storms, and Zetlanders, that the reader seems to inhale the fresh sea breeze from the pages in which Scott's genius has invested even these barren, remote islands with such new and peculiar interest.

Hogarth) with the miserable reality. It appeared to me that to draw a knot of such associates in crime as really do exist . . . would be to attempt something which was greatly needed, and which would be a service to society, and therefore I did it as I best could."—Preface to "Oliver Twist."

THE SURGEON'S DAUGHTER

CHAPTER VIII

THE SURGEON'S DAUGHTER

THIS story, partly founded on fact, but chiefly due to Scott's imagination, is the only one of his novels which refers to India. It has hardly, perhaps, obtained as much notice as it deserves, for though comparatively short and melancholy, it has many passages of interest and beauty of expression. The heroine, Miss Menie Gray, her worthy father, Dr. Gray, and her rival lovers, Adam Hartley and Richard Middlemas, are all Scottish people. Hartley is frank, brave, and generous, while Middlemas is, perhaps, one of the basest of all Scott's characters, yet the unfortunate Menie prefers him, handsome and insinuating, to the more straightforward and honest Hartley.

The beginning of the story is in Scotland,

but its chief interest begins when, after Dr. Gray's death, these three young people are all in India. Here, indeed, was a new field for Scott's genius. He owns it to be so, in earnest, spirited language, when contemplating writing this story, to his friend Mr. Fairscribe, a relative of the real Miss Gray, whose interesting story Scott heard first from him. Mr. Fairscribe, apparently a rather prejudiced Scottish Lowlander, thus reproaches Scott in an imaginary conversation for overpraising the Highlanders in his novels, and certainly "Waverley," "Rob Roy," and others succeeded wonderfully in making these mountaineers more interesting than ever before to English readers. Fairscribe thus remonstrates with his literary friend:

"You have brought in Highlanders into every story as if you were going back again, '*velis et remis*,' into the old days of Jacobitism. . . . I wish to Heaven all this tartan fever bode well to the Protestant succession and the Kirk of Scotland."

"Both too well settled, I hope, in the minds of the subject," said I, "to be affected by old

remembrances on which we look back as on the portraits of our ancestors, without recollecting, while we gaze on them, any of the feuds by which the originals were animated while alive. But most happy should I be to light upon any topic to supply the place of the Highlands, Mr. Fairscribe."

The latter replies suggesting a new subject to Scott :

"I think you might do with your Muse of Fiction, as you call her, as many an honest man does with his own sons in flesh and blood. . . . Send her to India, to be sure. That is the true place for a Scot to thrive in. . . . For great exploits, you have in the old history of India, before Europeans were numerous there, the most wonderful deeds, done by the least possible means, that perhaps the annals of the world can afford."

Scott replies, liking the proposed subject and perhaps modestly exaggerating his own ignorance of it :

"I know it," said I, kindling at the ideas his speech inspired. "I remember, in the delightful pages of Orme, the interest which mingles in his narrative from the very small number of English

which are engaged. Each officer of a regiment becomes known to you by name, nay, the non-commissioned officers and privates acquire an individual share of interest. . . . What do I say? They are like Homer's demi-gods among the warring mortals. Men like Clive and Caillard influenced great events like Jove himself. Inferior officers are like Mars or Neptune, and the sergeants and corporals might well pass for demi-gods. Then the various religious costumes, habits, and manners of the people of Hindostan—the patient Hindoo, the warlike Rajpoot, the haughty Moslemah, the savage and vindictive Malay—glorious and unbounded subjects! The only objection is that I have never been there, and know nothing at all about them."

After this emphatic denial by Scott of all knowledge about India and its people, it was hardly to be expected that he would introduce much about Indian history or characters in this novel. He has, however, brought in two Indian princes, father and son, Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sahib, in the south of India, whose wars with the British were then specially known to the British public. But his hero and heroine, Menie Gray and Adam Hartley, with her treacherous lover, Richard Middlemas, are

alike strangely involved with the scenes and inhabitants of Hindostan. Scott's noble comparison of the British in India to "the demi-gods of classic history among the warring mortals," would perhaps not please either the Mohammedan or Hindoo inhabitants of India, but probably this work has seldom been read by many of them. Though the larger and most important part of this story is laid in India, there are some fine passages in its earlier part referring to Scotland and to the Isle of Wight.

Despite Scott's knowledge of and admiration for the very different beauties of Scottish scenery, he yet acknowledges the attraction of the latter in words gratifying to its inhabitants even to this day. He writes:

> That beautiful island which he who once sees never forgets, through whatever part of the world his future path may lead him.[1]

The death of the unfortunate Mrs. Witherington,[2] mother of Middlemas, the villain in this

[1] Chap. vi. [2] Chap. viii.

story, is described in language which few indeed but Walter Scott could command; pathetic and powerful, without sentimental exaggeration, it indicates an appreciation of music which Scott rarely expresses. General and Mrs. Zilia Witherington, the latter a great invalid, meet and recognise their illegitimate son Richard Middlemas, who does not know them. He thus unconsciously reproaches both parents, while thanking his father.

He exclaims:

"... How much greater a debt do I owe you than to the unnatural parents who brought me into this world by their sin and deserted me through their cruelty!"

Zilia, as she heard these cutting words, flung back her veil. ... "Did you hear him, Richard?" she exclaimed, in accents terribly loud, considering the exhausted state of her strength. "Did you hear the words? It was Heaven speaking our condemnation by the voice of our own child. But do not fear, my Richard, do not weep! I will answer the thunder of Heaven with its own music."

She flew to a harpsichord which stood in the room, ... she wandered over the keys, producing

a wilderness of harmony composed of passages recalled by memory or combined by her own musical talent, until at length her voice and instrument united in one of those magnificent hymns in which her youth had praised her Maker with voice and harp, like the Royal Hebrew who composed it. The tear ebbed insensibly from the eyes which she turned upwards—her vocal tones combining with those of the instrument rose to a pitch of brilliancy seldom attained by the most distinguished performers and then sunk into a dying cadence which fell never again to rise—for the songstress had died with her strain.

The main interest of this singular story lies in the south of India. This rich, beautiful country, the most important of all the British conquests and dependencies, Scott had never seen. But he had avowedly read India's history attentively, following British conquests therein with natural pride and gratification. He had, moreover, doubtless conversed with people well acquainted with it; and thus, though without personal experience, he is able to describe part of its scenery, as well as two of its historical characters—the King, Hyder Ali, and his son Tippoo Sahib—with much of his usual spirit

and interest. At the beginning of the story Scott shows some national pride when mentioning British triumphs in India, but he describes no battles or any kind of warfare.

Later on Scott gradually involves his three Scottish characters—Menie Gray and her two lovers, the honest Hartley and the false Middlemas, with the Indian princes, the brave Hyder Ali and his son, the licentious Tippoo. Hartley, a young medical man, succeeds in healing a certain Mohammedan Fakir[1]—an agent, adherent, and spy of the Nawaub Hyder Ali. As in the "Talisman," Scott apparently likes to describe favourably the few Mohammedans whom he ever notices, investing them with an interest and attributing to them a majestic style of speaking, rendering them more attractive than the accounts of many modern travellers or residents represent them.

Hartley enters the chamber of the patient, called Barak-el-Hadgi, and, to the latter's surprise, refuses a valuable ring from the grateful Fakir as a reward for his medical services:[2]

[1] A religious ascetic, or begging monk. [2] Chap. x.

"A Feringhi can then refuse gold!" said the Fakir. "I thought they took it from every hand,"

and likely such was the usual rule with Europeans, whether travellers, soldiers, or rulers, in India at this time; but the generous nature of Hartley induces him to reply, while availing himself of the usual respect in which the Book, or Old Testament, is received alike by Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans:

"The Book says that it is Allah[1] who closes and who enlarges the heart. Frank and Mussalman are alike moulded by His pleasure."

These words were well suited to the devout Mohammedan, who exclaims:

"My brother hath spoken wisely. Welcome the disease, if it bring thee acquainted with a wise physician. For what said the poet?—'It is well to have fallen to the earth, if while grovelling there thou shalt discover a diamond.'"

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[1] The Creator.

Scott continues :

The physician made repeated visits to his patient, and continued to do so even after the health of Barak-el-Hadgi was completely restored. He had no difficulty in discerning in him one of those secret agents frequently employed by Asiatic sovereigns. . . . Barak talked often amid their private conversations of the power and dignity of the Nawaub of Mysore; and Hartley had little doubt that he came from the Court of Hyder Ali on some secret mission, perhaps for achieving a more solid peace betwixt that able and sagacious Prince and the East India Company's Government—that which existed for the time being regarded on both parts as little more than a hollow and insincere truce. He told many stories to the advantage of this Prince, who certainly was one of the wisest that Hindostan could boast, and, amidst great crimes perpetrated to gratify his ambition, displayed many instances of princely generosity, and, what was a little more surprising, of even-handed justice.

On one occasion, shortly before Barak-el-Hadgi left Madras, he visited the doctor and partook of his sherbet, which he preferred to his own, perhaps because a few glasses of rum or brandy were usually added to enrich the compound. It might be owing to repeated applications to the jar which contained this generous fluid that the Pilgrim became more than usually frank in his communications. . . .

"Brother of my soul," he said, "do but think if thou needest aught that the all-powerful Hyder Ali Khan Behauder can give, and then use not the intercession of those who dwell in palaces, and wear jewels in their turbans, but seek the cell of thy brother at the Great City which is Seringapatam. And the poor Fakir, in his torn cloak, shall better advance thy suit with the Nawaub" (for Hyder did not assume the title of Sultan) "than they who sit upon seats of honour in the Divan."

With these and sundry other expressions of regard he exhorted Hartley to come into the Mysore and look upon the face of the Great Prince, whose glance inspired wisdom and whose nod conferred wealth, so that Folly or Poverty could not appear before him. . . .

. . . The friends parted with mutual good wishes,

but Barak also gave Hartley a present of rare peculiar value, in the shape of a passport, saying:

"The head of him who should disrespect this safe-conduct shall not be more safe than that of the barley-stalk which the reaper has grasped in his hand. . . ."

It was several months after Barak had returned to the interior of India that Hartley was astonished by an unexpected rencounter. The ships from

Europe had but lately arrived, and had brought over their usual cargo of boys longing to be commanders and young women without any purpose of being married, but whom a pious duty to some brother, some uncle, or other male relative had brought to India to keep his house until they should find themselves in one of their own. Dr. Hartley happened to attend a public breakfast given on this occasion by a gentleman high in the service.

Here the rencounter Scott mentions took place. Hartley beheld a stately lady, splendidly dressed, and so remarkable-looking that he asks a friend:

"For Heaven's sake, what is that for a Zenobia?"

Evidently this stately, magnificently dressed lady in gorgeous Oriental costume, and treated with great respect by all around, recalled to young Hartley's mind the heroic Syrian queen of classic times, whom he had doubtless read of, admired, and pitied. Scott's Madame de Montreville, however, far more resembles Shakespeare's description of Cleopatra, being a mixture of cunning, ferocity, jealousy, and

intrigue. She seems, indeed, to combine the worst qualities of the European and Asiatic character; but she is not very fully described, though everything that is said or indicated about her represents one of the most dangerous and hateful of all Scott's female characters.

Hartley is surprised to hear one of the company at the breakfast exclaim at the sight of her:

"Angels and ministers! there is our old acquaintance, the Queen of Sheba, returned upon our hands like unsaleable goods."

Hartley now hears that she is the daughter of a Scottish emigrant, widow of a French or Swiss officer named Montreville, and often named, or rather nicknamed, the Queen of Sheba. Hartley, while listening to this account, recognises Menie Gray seated near and partly hid by the portly form of this majestic lady. He approaches her, but though she never spoke,

she slightly touched her upper lip with her fore-finger,

a slight gesture which Hartley construes into wishing him not to speak to her at that time. The haughty, if not insolent, Madame Montreville, however, observing Hartley's anxiety and embarrassment, addressed him in English,

which savoured slightly of a Swiss patois: "You haave come to us very fast, sir, to say nothing at all,"

and sharply asks:

"Are you sure that you did not get your tongue stolen by the way?"

Hartley apologises, while Menie repeats her sign to say no more at present, and Hartley returns to two English friends—Major Mercer and Mr. Butler—and hears from them an account of this mysterious Queen of Sheba calculated to arouse the curiosity of any one.

Her foreign husband, an officer in the French

army, had tried to make himself independent, and, Mr. Butler related:

". . . commenced soldier on his own account. He got possession of a fort under pretence of keeping it for some simple Rajah or other; assembled around him a parcel of desperate vagabonds, of every colour in the rainbow; occupied a considerable territory, of which he raised the duties in his own name, and declared for independence. But Hyder understood no such interloping proceedings, and down he came, besieged the fort, and took it, though some pretend it was betrayed to him by this very woman. Be that as it may, the poor Swiss was found dead on the ramparts. Certain it is she received large sums of money under pretence of paying off her troops, surrendering of hill-forts, and Heaven knows what besides. She was permitted to retain some insignia of royalty, and as she was wont to talk of Hyder as the Eastern Solomon, she generally became known by the title of Queen of Sheba. She leaves her Court when she pleases. . . . In a word, she does pretty much as she likes. The great folks here are civil to her, though they look on her as little better than a spy. As to Hyder, it is supposed he has insured her fidelity by borrowing the greater part of her treasures, which prevents her from daring to break with him—besides other causes that smack of scandal of another sort."

"A singular story," replied Hartley to his companion, while his heart dwelt on the question, How it was possible that the simple and gentle Menie Gray should be in the train of such a character as this adventuress.

Hartley's other English friend, Major Mercer, now enlightens and surprises him in a yet more alarming way by saying:

". . . Your old acquaintance, Mr. Tresham or Mr. Middlemas, or whatever else he chooses to be called, has been complimented by a report that he stood very high in the good graces of this same Boadicea. He certainly commanded some troops which she still keeps on foot, and acted at their head in the Nawaub's service, who craftily employed him in whatever could render him odious to his countrymen. The British prisoners were entrusted to his charge, and to judge by what I felt myself, the devil might take a lesson from him in severity.

"And was he attached to, or connected with this woman?"

"So Mrs. Rumour told us in our dungeon. Poor Jack Ward had the bastinado for celebrating their merits in a parody on the playhouse song,

> Sure such a pair were never seen,
> So aptly formed to meet by nature."

Scott adds:

Hartley could listen no longer.

The idea of this helpless and innocent Scottish girl being in the power of such people horrified, as well as nearly stupified, Hartley, when he received from some unknown messenger a card bearing the words—

"Miss Gray, Mrs. Montreville's, at the house of Ram Sing Cottah, in the Black Town,"

and naming the hour,

"eight in the morning."

Hartley, while longing again to see and assist her, consults another English acquaintance, Mr. Esdale, about the powerful and unscrupulous woman with whom Menie Gray seems so strangely associated. Esdale gives some additional information. He apparently thinks, however, that Madame Montreville may have been rather slandered, adding, to Hartley's astonish-

ment, that there was said to be some connection or alliance between this lady and the man whom he calls "poor Middlemas." Hartley recalls the fact of the latter's desertion from the British, his countrymen, to the service of Hyder Ali, who is now at fierce war with them. Esdale cautiously replies, and is apparently alarmed or perplexed about Indian politics at this time, and rather inclined to pity Middlemas, whose friendship or intrigue or alliance with the Begum, *alias* Madame Montreville, he rather doubts. He adds, to Hartley's surprise:

"It is possible that he [Middlemas] may do us better service in Hyder's capital or Tippoo's camp than he could have done if serving with his own regiment. . . . He told me himself—and I believe him—that he accepted the office [under Hyder] chiefly because, while he made a great bullying at us before the black fellows, he could privately be of assistance to us. . . . All this in confidence."

Hartley well knows the deceitful nature of Middlemas, his successful rival in the love of Menie Gray.

Distracted by the contradictory intelligence he had received, Hartley went next to question old Captain Capstern, the captain of the Indiaman, whom he had observed in attendance on the Begum Montreville.

. . . On inquiring after that commander's female passengers, Capstern recollected that Menie Gray, a young Scotchwoman, had come out under charge of Mrs. Duffer, the master's wife. "A good decent girl," Capstern said, "and kept the mates and guinea-pigs at a respectable distance. She came out," he believed, "to be a sort of female companion or upper servant in Madame Montreville's family. Snug berth enough," he concluded, "if she can find the length of the old girl's foot."

The next day Hartley calls at Madame Montreville's residence, and is

"ushered into an apartment where he expected to be joined by Miss Gray. The room opened on one side into a small garden, filled with the brilliant-coloured flowers of Eastern climates; in the midst of which the waters of a fountain rose upwards in a sparkling jet and fell back again into a white marble cistern. . . . A step was heard—the door opened—a female appeared—but it was the portly form of Madame Montreville."

This lady, evidently disliking or suspecting Hartley, sharply accosts him in words which are scarcely polite. This woman does not seem to be drawn from real life, but her whole conduct is described by Scott with thorough consistency :

"What do you please to want, sir?" said the lady, "that is, if you have found your tongue this morning, which you had lost yesterday."

"I proposed myself the honour of waiting upon the young person whom I saw in your Excellency's company yesterday morning," answered Hartley, with assumed respect. "I have had long the honour of being known to her in Europe, and I desire to offer her my services in India."

"Much obliged, much obliged, but Miss Gray is gone out and does not return for one or two days. You may leave your commands with me."

"Pardon me, madam," replied Hartley, "but I have some reason to hope you may be mistaken in this matter—and here comes the lady herself!"

"How is this, my dear?" said Madame Montreville with unruffled front to Menie as she entered. "Are you not gone out for two or three days, as I tell this gentleman?—*mais c'est égal*—it is all one thing. You will say, How d'ye do, and good-bye to monsieur, who is so polite as to come to ask after

our healths, and as he sees us both very well, he will go away home again."

"I believe, madam," said Miss Gray with an appearance of effort, "that I must speak with this gentleman for a few minutes in private, if you will permit me."

"That is to say, get you gone? but I do not allow that—I do not like private conversation between young man and pretty young woman; *cela n'est pas honnête.* It cannot be in my house."

"It may be out of it then, madam," answered Miss Gray, not pettishly nor pertly, but with the utmost simplicity. "Mr. Hartley, will you step into that garden?—and you, madam, may observe us from the window, if it be the fashion of the country to watch so closely. . . ."

The Queen of Sheba, notwithstanding her natural assurance, was disconcerted by the composure of Miss Gray's manner, and left the room apparently in displeasure.

An affecting interview now takes place between Menie and Hartley, whom she touchingly informs of her father's, Dr. Gray's, death. He had always preferred of his two pupils Hartley to Middlemas, but unfortunately for herself Menie preferred the latter. Hartley

eagerly asks why she is here with this woman, and Menie owns she is not what she expected, adding that she will soon be married to Middlemas. Hartley vainly warns her against this man, whom he has long distrusted, but Menie is completely deceived by his artful treachery, and all Hartley can do is to give her his own address and depart anticipating the worst. After he is gone there ensues a scene of terrible excitement between Madame Montreville and Middlemas, who is now disguised as her black Indian slave and called Sadoc. These two are secretly plotting together to deliver up Miss Gray to the Prince Tippoo Sahib, yet each distrusts the other, at least to some extent. Middlemas, despite his cunning and deceit, has at last met with more than his match in this fierce, unscrupulous woman. As before observed, she resembles Cleopatra in jealousy, intrigue, and ferocity combined, rather than either of the heroines, Zenobia or Boadicea, to whom she is compared by some English acquaintances.

Scott describes her interview with the dis-

guised Middlemas, directly Hartley has left her house,[1] and adds:

It appeared from the conversation which follows that they had from some place of concealment overheard the dialogue

between Menie and Hartley.

"It is good luck, Sadoc," said the lady, "that there is in this world the great fool."

"And the great villain," answered Sadoc in good English, but in a most sullen tone.

"This woman now," continued the lady, "is what in Frangistan you call an angel."

"Ay, and I have seen those in Hindostan you may well call devil."

"I am sure that this—how you call him—Hartley is a meddling devil. For what has he to do? She will not have any of him. What is his business who has her? I wish we were well up the Ghauts again, my dear Sadoc."

Scott here describes the guilty wretch Middlemas making an extraordinary revelation of his

[1] Chap. xii.

mind and feelings, which only enrages this dangerous woman all the more :

". . . Hark you, Adela, I begin to sicken of the plan we have laid. This creature's confiding purity—call her angel or woman as you will—makes my practices appear too vile even in my own eyes. I feel myself unfit to be your companion farther in the daring paths which you pursue. Let us part and part friends."

"Amen, coward. But the woman remains with me," answered the Queen of Sheba.[1]

"With thee!" replied the seeming black ; "never. No, Adela. She is under the shadow of the British flag, and she shall experience its protection."

In this dreadful scene Scott evidently means to describe the base Middlemas, if not repentant, as at least shocked and horrified at the atrocious woman in whose power he now finds himself. At the mention of the British authority protecting Menie, whom she now perceives that Middlemas loves, the Begum replies with fury :

[1] Scott writes in a footnote : "In order to maintain uninjured the tone of passion throughout this dialogue, it has been judged expedient to discard in the language of the Begum the *patois* of Madame Montreville."

"Yes—and what protection will it afford yourself? What if I should clap my hands and command a score of my black servants to bind you like a sheep, and then send word to the Governor of the Presidency that one Richard Middlemas, who has been guilty of murder, mutiny, desertion, and serving of the enemy against his countrymen, is here at Ram Singh Cotta's house, in the disguise of a black servant?"

Middlemas covered his face with his hands, while Madame Montreville proceeded to load him with reproaches.

Her reproaches, as Scott terms them, now reveal the positions of these wicked allies more clearly, perhaps, than a lengthened description could do. Middlemas, despite his baseness, begins to feel some remorse for his conduct to Menie, as the savage temper of the Begum as well as her past history have become more known to him.

These two artful Europeans are now in fact playing a dangerous game between the ruler Hyder Ali and his ambitious son, Prince Tippoo. Their intrigues with these Indian princes begin to make them distrust each other, and all the more when Madame Montreville discovers

some lingering affection for Miss Gray in the heart of Middlemas. Hitherto this Scottish villain had never encountered such a ferocious character as the Begum Montreville, who seems to unite in herself the intelligence and courage of a European with the cunning and ferocity of an Asiatic. She now, in this excited scene, indulges in a torrent of furious threats, all of which Middlemas has every reason to fear.

"Yes," she said, "slave and son of a slave! Since you wear the dress of my household, you shall obey me as fully as the rest of them; otherwise—whips, fetters—the scaffold, renegade—the gallows, murderer! Dost thou dare to reflect on the abyss of misery from which I raised thee, to share my wealth and my affections? Dost thou not remember that the picture of this pale, cold, unimpassioned girl was then so indifferent to thee, that thou didst sacrifice it as a tribute due to the benevolence of her who, wretch as thou art, condescended to love thee?"

"Yes, fell woman," answered Middlemas, "but was it I who encouraged the young tyrant's [Tippoo] outrageous passion for a portrait, or who formed the abominable plan of placing the original within his power?"

"No—for to do so required brain and wit. But

it was thine, flimsy villain, to execute the device which a bolder genius planned; it was thine to entice the woman to this foreign shore, under pretence of a love which on thy part, cold-blooded miscreant, never had existed."

"Peace, screech-owl!" answered Middlemas, "nor drive me to such madness as may lead me to forget thou art a woman."

"A woman, dastard! Is this thy pretext for sparing me?—what then art thou, who tremblest at a woman's looks, a woman's words? I am a woman, renegade, but one who wears a dagger, and despises alike thy strength and thy courage. I am a woman who has looked on more dying men than thou hast killed deer and antelopes. . . . Thou wilt be a double traitor, forsooth—betray thy betrothed to the Prince in order to obtain the means of betraying the Prince to the English, and thus gain thy pardon from thy countrymen. But me thou shalt not betray. I will not be made the tool of thy ambition. I will not give thee the aid of my treasury and my soldiers, to be sacrificed at last to this northern icicle. No, I will watch thee, as the fiend watches the wizard. Show me but a symptom of betraying me while we are here, and I denounce thee to the English. . . . Go where thou wilt, slave, thou shalt find me thy mistress."

"And a fair though an unkind one," said the counterfeit Sadoc, suddenly changing his tone to an affectation of tenderness. "It is true I pity this unhappy woman; true I would save her if I could—but most

unjust to suppose I would in any circumstances prefer her to my Nourjehan, my light of the world, my Mootee Mahul, my pearl of the palace——"

"All false coin and empty compliment," said the Begum. "Let me hear in two brief words that you leave this woman to my disposal."

"But not to be interred alive under your seat, like the Circassian of whom you were jealous," said Middlemas, shuddering.

This terrible murder Scott does not again refer to, but the fierce woman sternly replies, as if knowing she has now both Middlemas and Menie Gray in her power:

"No, fool; her lot shall not be worse than that of being the favourite of a prince. Hast thou, fugitive and criminal as thou art, a better fate to offer her?"

"But," replied Middlemas, blushing even through his base disguise at the consciousness of his abject conduct, "I will have no force on her inclinations."

"Such truce she shall have as the laws of the Zenana allow," replied the female tyrant. "A week is long enough for her to determine whether she will be the willing mistress of a princely and generous lover."

"Ay," said Richard, "and before that week expires——" He stopped short.

"What will happen before that week expires?" said the Begum Montreville.

"No matter—nothing of consequence. I leave the woman's fate with you."

"'Tis well—we march to-night on our return, so soon as the moon rises. Give orders to our retinue."

"To hear is to obey," replied the seeming slave, and left the apartment.

The eyes of the Begum remained fixed on the door through which he had passed. "Villain—double-dyed villain," she said, "I see thy drift; thou wouldst betray Tippoo in policy alike and in love. But me thou canst not betray. Ho there, who waits? Let a trusty messenger be ready to set off instantly with letters, which I will presently make ready. His departure must be a secret to every one. And now shall this pale phantom soon know her destiny, and learn what it is to have rivalled Adela Montreville."

Scott continues, carefully explaining the different plots, designs, and objects of this wicked pair:

While the Amazonian princess meditated plans of vengeance against her innocent rival and the guilty lover, the latter plotted as deeply for his own purposes.

Scott, apparently shocked at the baseness of Middlemas which he so carefully describes, writes, as if trying to attempt some degree of extenuation for his conduct, though in a rather vague manner:

. . . He had waited until such brief twilight as India enjoys rendered his disguise complete, then set out in haste for the part of Madras inhabited by Europeans, or, as it is termed, Fort Saint George.

"I will save her yet," he said; "ere Tippoo can seize his prize, we will raise around his ears a storm which would drive the God of War from the arms of the Goddess of Beauty. The trap shall close its fangs upon this Indian tiger, ere he has time to devour the bait which enticed him into the snare."

While Middlemas cherished these hopes he approached the Residency. The sentinel on duty stopped him as of course, but he was in possession of the countersign, and entered without opposition. He rounded the building in which the President of the Council resided, an able and active but unconscientious man, who neither in his own affairs nor in those of the Company was supposed to embarrass himself much about the means which he used to attain his object. A tap

at a small postern gate was answered by a black slave, who admitted Middlemas to that necessary appurtenance of every government, a back stair, which in its turn conducted him into the office of the Brahmin Paupiah, the *Dubash*, or steward, of the great man, and by whose means he communicated with the native courts, and carried on many mysterious intrigues which he did not communicate to his brethren at the council board. It is perhaps but justice to the guilty and unhappy Middlemas to suppose that, if the agency of a British officer had been employed, he might have been induced to throw himself on his mercy, might have explained the whole of his nefarious bargain with Tippoo, and, renouncing his guilty projects of ambition, might have turned his whole thoughts upon saving Menie Gray, ere she was transported beyond the reach of British protection.

Scott, unused to describe Oriental characters and intrigues, which he never introduces except briefly in "The Talisman," here presents a crafty Hindoo, describing him with a care and interest rather surprising in a writer who was never in India, or even in Asia. He had doubtless, however, heard such people described on good authority, and

owing to his own profound, extraordinary knowledge of human nature, fully comprehended the description. Middlemas, though cunning, deceitful, and unscrupulous, was now to have a private interview with a Hindoo, a foe to the British, as artful and intriguing as himself. Scott, in his observant, picturesque style, proceeds to describe this man when presenting himself to Middlemas in the Residency :

But the thin, dusky form which stood before him, wrapped in robes of muslin embroidered with gold, was that of Paupiah, known as a master-counsellor of dark projects, an Oriental Machiavel, whose premature wrinkles were the result of many an intrigue, in which the existence of the poor, the happiness of the rich, the honour of men, and the chastity of women had been sacrificed without scruple to attain some private or political advantage. He did not even inquire by what means the renegade Briton proposed to acquire that influence with Tippoo which might enable him to betray him—he only desired to be assured that the fact was real.

Scott makes this fellow, though a Hindoo,

quite devoted to the Mohammedan princes Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sahib. Paupiah's supposed resemblance to the celebrated Italian statesman and writer Machiavelli, whom Shakespeare terms "the murderous Machiavel,"[1] and Macaulay rather vindicates,[2] strangely occurs to Scott's mind. Two able and artful men, born in such different countries, and placed in such different circumstances, could only much resemble each other in unscrupulous deceit and talent for intrigue. Paupiah seems crafty yet rather boastful, distrusting Middlemas and equally distrusted by him. Their singular interview, entirely the novelist's invention, certainly shows the base, selfish renegade Middlemas as almost below the Hindoo in both cunning and influence at present. Paupiah, evidently knowing Middlemas well, rather haughtily begins:

"You speak at the risk of your head, if you deceive Paupiah, or make Paupiah the means of

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[1] "Henry VI.," Part III.

[2] "Essay on Machiavel."

deceiving his master. I know, so does all Madras, that the Nawaub has placed his young son Tippoo as Vice-Regent of his newly-conquered territory of Bangalore, which Hyder hath lately added to his dominions. But that Tippoo should bestow the government of that important place on an apostate Feringi seems more doubtful."

Scott continues to describe the plotting of these two conspirators, the European and the Indian each distrusting the other, and alike afraid of the two powerful and fierce Indian princes, father and son, whose hostility to the advancing power of the British is steadily increasing.

"Tippoo is young," answered Middlemas, "and to youth the temptation of the passions is what a lily on the surface of the lake is to childhood—they will risk life to reach it, though when obtained it is of little value. Tippoo has the cunning of his father and his military talents, but he lacks his cautious wisdom."

"Thou speakest truth—but when thou art Governor of Bangalore hast thou forces to hold the place till thou art relieved by the Mahrattas or by the British?"

"Doubt it not—the soldiers of the Begum Mootee Mahul, whom the Europeans call Montreville, are less hers than mine. I am myself her *Bukshee* (General), and her *Sirdars* are at my devotion. With these I could keep Bangalore for two months, and the British army may be before it in a week. What do you risk by advancing General Smith's army nearer to the frontier?"

"We risk a settled peace with Hyder," answered Paupiah; ". . . yet I say not but thy plan may be most advantageous. Thou sayest Tippoo's treasures are in the fort?"

"His treasures and his Zenana; I may even be able to secure his person."

"That were a goodly pledge," answered the Hindoo minister.

"And you consent that the treasures shall be divided to the last rupee, as in the scroll?"

"The share of Paupiah's master is too small," said the Brahmin, "and the name of Paupiah is unnoticed."

"The share of the Begum may be divided between Paupiah and his master," answered Middlemas.

"But the Begum will expect her proportion," replied Paupiah.

"Let me alone to deal with her," said Middlemas. "Before the blow is struck, she shall not know of our private treaty, and afterwards her disappointment will be of slight consequence. And now remember my stipulations—my rank to be restored, my full pardon to be granted."

Scott describes Paupiah as suspecting the supposed renegade Christian, Middlemas, rather than fearing him, for this Indian must well know how friendless this European is in reality among both Hindoos and Mohammedans at this time in India. He therefore makes a rather threatening assent to the requests of Middlemas for power and promotion.

"Ay," replied Paupiah cautiously, "should you succeed. But were you to betray what has here passed, I will find the dagger of a Lootie which shall reach thee, wert thou sheltered under the folds of the Nawaub's garment. In the meantime take this missive, and when you are in possession of Bangalore despatch it to General Smith, whose division shall have orders to approach as near the frontier of Mysore as may be without causing suspicion."

Thus parted this worthy pair; Paupiah to report to his principal (Tippoo) the progress of their dark machinations, Middlemas to join the Begum on her return to the Mysore. The gold and diamonds of Tippoo, the importance which he was about to acquire, the ridding himself at once of the capricious authority of the irritable Tippoo and the troublesome claims of the Begum, were such agreeable subjects of contemplation, that he scarcely thought

of the fate of his European victim, unless to salve his conscience with the hope that the sole injury she could sustain might be the alarm of a few days, during the course of which he would acquire the means of delivering her from the tyrant in whose Zenana she was to remain a temporary prisoner. He resolved at the same time to abstain from seeing her till the moment he could afford her protection, justly considering the danger which his whole plan might incur if he again awakened the jealousy of the Begum. This he trusted was now asleep, and in the course of their return to Tippoo's camp, near Bangalore, it was his study to soothe this ambitious and crafty female by blandishments, intermingled with the more splendid prospects of wealth and power to be opened to them both, as he pretended, by the success of his present enterprise.

Scott himself has invented these plots, as also the whole position of these two Europeans, Adela Montreville and Richard Middlemas. Placed as this dangerous, unscrupulous pair now are, amid Mohammedans and Hindoos, treacherous to each other and to all about them, they must have soon forfeited British protection, and have become suspected and likely been destroyed by either section of the native inhabitants.

The novelist, therefore, well knowing their improbable, if not impossible, position, writes in an instructive footnote :[1]

"It is scarce necessary to say that such things could only be acted in the earlier period of our Indian settlements, when the check of the Directors was imperfect and that of the Crown did not exist."

The danger of the unfortunate Menie Gray is now revealed to Hartley, in a brief note which he receives from herself through an Indian servant, containing these few, but most expressive words :

"All is true your fears foretold. He has delivered me up to a cruel woman who threatens to sell me to the tyrant Tippoo. Save me if you can—if you have not pity, or cannot give me aid, there is none left upon earth.—M. G."

Scott continues :

The haste with which Dr. Hartley sped to the Fort and demanded an audience of the Governor

[1] Chap. xii.

was defeated by the delays interposed by Paupiah. It did not suit the plans of this artful Hindoo that any interruption should be opposed to the departure of the Begum and her favourite, considering how much the plans of the last corresponded with his own. He affected incredulity on the charge when Hartley complained of an Englishwoman being detained in the train of the Begum against her consent.

Amid all these plots and intrigues Scott makes his hero Hartley preserve his firm and determined course of action. He now resolves at all risks to attempt Menie's rescue, and learns from an English gentleman, a Mr. Esdale, that Tippoo's father, Hyder Ali, though often called a tyrant, rather prides himself upon rendering strict justice when applied to by humble suppliants. Hartley, resolving to appeal to this prince, sets out on a somewhat perilous journey :

Having furnished himself with money and with the attendance of three trusty native servants, mounted like himself, on Arab horses . . . Hartley lost not a moment in taking the road to Mysore, endeavour-

ing in the meantime, by recollecting every story he had ever heard of Hyder's justice and forbearance, to assure himself that he should find the Nawaub disposed to protect a helpless female, even against the future heir of his empire.

Scott describes his journey in his usual careful, picturesque style. Though never in India, he had evidently heard and studied the descriptive accounts of those who knew that attractive and beautiful country. He writes:

The sun had set ere the party reached the foot of one of those perilous passes up which lay the road to Seringapatam. A narrow path which in summer resembled an empty watercourse, winding upwards among immense rocks and precipices, was at one time completely overshadowed by dark groves of teak-trees and at another found its way beside impenetrable jungles, the habitation of jackals and tigers. . . .

The travellers received the first accounts of the progress of the Begum and her party by a *Peon* (or foot-soldier), who had been in their company, but was now on his return to the coast. . . . He understood it was the purpose of the Begum to proceed by slow marches to Bangalore. . . . From the result of his anxious inquiries, Hartley had reason

to hope that though Seringapatam was seventy-five miles more to the eastward than Bangalore, yet by using diligence he might have time to throw himself at the foot of Hyder and beseech his interposition before the meeting betwixt Tippoo and the Begum should decide the fate of Menie Gray. On the other hand, he trembled as the *Peon* told him that the Begum's *Bukshee*, or General, who had travelled to Madras in disguise with her, had now assumed the dress and character belonging to his rank, and it was expected he was to be honoured by the Mohammedan prince with some high office of dignity. . . . With still deeper anxiety he learned that a palanquin, watched with sedulous care by the slaves of Oriental jealousy, contained, it was whispered, a Feringi (European) woman, beautiful as a Houri, who had been brought from England by the Begum as a present to Tippoo. The deed of villainy was therefore in full train to be accomplished ; it remained to see whether by diligence on Hartley's side its course could be interrupted.

Scott here reveals some knowledge of, as well as interest in, Indian curiosities, yet only briefly notices them, while continuing to relate this picturesque, pathetic novel. He therefore describes his noble young hero Hartley now amid new troubles and difficulties, yet striving to

rescue at the risk of his life the betrayed Miss Gray from the power of the Begum and Tippoo Sahib. He thus sympathetically describes Hartley:

> When this eager vindicator of betrayed innocence arrived in the capital of Hyder, it may be believed that he consumed no time in viewing the temple of the celebrated Vishnoo, or in surveying the splendid gardens called Loll-bang, which were the monuments of Hyder's magnificence and now hold his mortal remains.

Scott then states how Hartley, after much trouble, danger, and difficulty, meets with a friendly Indian, once in the British service, who undertakes to give his message to the Fakir Barak-el-Hadgi, to be by him delivered to the Nawaub Hyder himself. At this time the bold, ambitious young Prince Tippoo in his father's absence was apparently absolute, and Hartley was informed that to oppose Tippoo's wishes

> was the ready way to destruction. . . . In the evening the call of the Muezzins thundering from the minarets had invited the faithful to prayers, when a black

servant about fifteen years old stood before Hartley and pronounced these words deliberately and twice over: "Thus says Barak-el-Hadgi, the watcher in the Mosque: He that would see the sun rise, let him turn towards the east."

These mysterious words, Scott says, had the effect of rousing the persevering Hartley to renewed exertion. He followed the young Indian into a garden or grove. This young guide, as well as Barak-el-Hadgi, Hyder Ali and Tippoo, are Mohammedans, and no Hindoo is introduced in this story, except the crafty Paupiah, who is evidently completely under Mohammedan rule or influence.

The next and last chapter (xiv.) of this singular story is certainly a welcome relief to readers. The treacherous villainy of Middlemas, and of the European Begum, Madame Montreville, in delivering up the deceived Menie Gray to Tippoo Sahib was now near its final accomplishment. Although Scott intimates a vague if not hopeless design of Middlemas to finally rescue Menie by a secret plot of his own, he is apparently too much in the power of the

jealous Begum and the licentious Prince Tippoo to succeed, and Menie's eventual rescue is entirely due to the courage and devotion of her rejected Scottish lover, Adam Hartley. Scott had evidently studied or listened carefully to accounts of Indian life and habits, and though personally ignorant of both, is enabled by his naturally wonderful genius to describe them with much the same attraction, though with less detail than he displays in his novels laid in England,[1] Scotland,[2] and France.[3]

When Hartley is following his Indian guide through Seringapatam, Scott proceeds to describe his entering into

> a grove of mango-trees, through which the infant moon was twinkling faintly amid the murmur of waters, the sweet song of the nightingale, and the odours of the rose, yellow jasmine, orange and citron flowers and Persian narcissus. Huge domes and arches which were seen imperfectly in the quivering light seemed to intimate the neighbourhood of some

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1 "Nigel," "Ivanhoe."

2 "Antiquary," "The Heart of Midlothian."

3 "Quentin Durward."

sacred edifice, where the Fakir had doubtless taken up his residence.

Scott now describes Hartley coming into the presence of Barak-el-Hadgi and another white-bearded Fakir. Hartley found that Barak, his former friend, was most deferential to this old Fakir, whom Hartley now addresses, telling him the plot to betray Miss Gray to Prince Tippoo, and begged for the intercession of the old Fakir with Hyder Ali or with Tippoo. The Fakir after a while exclaims:

"The unbeliever has spoken like a poet. But does he think that the Nawaub Khan Hyder Ali Behauder will contest with his son Tippoo the Victorious the possession of an infidel slave?"

These words might seem discouraging to Hartley, but he receives a private sign from Barak to continue his pleading with this mysterious Fakir. Hartley, having fortunately some knowledge of the Koran, is thus able to make from that extraordinary book a most impressive and indirectly applicable quotation:

"The Nawaub is in the place of the Prophet, a judge over the low as well as high. It is written that when the Prophet decided a controversy between the two sparrows concerning a grain of rice, his wife Fatima said to him, 'Doth the missionary of Allah well to bestow his time in distributing justice on a matter so slight and between such despicable litigants?' 'Know, woman,' answered the Prophet, 'that the sparrows and the grain of rice are the creation of Allah. They are not worth more than thou hast spoken, but justice is a treasure of inestimable price, and it must be imparted by him who holdeth power to all who require it at his hand. The Prince doth the will of Allah, who gives it alike in small matters as in great, and to the poor as well as the powerful. To a hungry bird a grain of rice is as a chaplet of pearls to a sovereign.' I have spoken."

This appeal to the spirit and teaching of the Koran at once produces a strong, though not as yet a decisive effect on the grave old Mohammedan, who, apparently surprised at such knowledge of his own religion in a European Christian, exclaims:

"Bismillah!—Praise be to God! he hath spoken like a Moullah,"

while Barak, a steady friend to Hartley through-

out this scene, observes, in deference to the words of the Mohammedan Prophet :

"The lips have spoken it which cannot lie."

Here Scott describes the elder Fakir making a remarkable trial of Hartley's strict and careful veracity by asking him this trying question :

"Hast thou heard, Feringi, of aught of treason meditated by this Kaffir [infidel, Middlemas] against the Nawaub Behauder ?"

Hartley makes a straightforward reply which proves his own conscientious truth :

"Out of a traitor cometh treason, but to speak after my knowledge I am not conscious of such a design."

The shrewd old Fakir thoughtfully rejoins, evidently satisfied with the experiment he has made to prove Hartley's honesty :

"There is truth in the words of him who accuseth not his enemy save on his knowledge. The things

thou hast spoken shall be laid before the Nawaub, and as Allah and he will, so shall the issue be."

Hartley then retires from the presence of the Fakir, and the next most interesting and important scene is his arrival at Seringapatam, the capital of the Mysore district, now ruled by Hyder Ali and by his son Tippoo Sahib. It is evidently a Mohammedan city, such Hindoos as inhabit it being quite subject to Moslem rule. Scott now describes a beautiful scene:

It occupied a tope or knoll covered with trees, and looked full on the gardens which Tippoo had created in one quarter of the city. The rich pavilions of the principal persons flamed with silk and gold; and spears with gilded points or poles supporting gold knobs displayed numerous little banners inscribed with the name of the Prophet. This was the camp of the Begum Mootee Mohul, who with a small body of her troops, about two hundred men, was waiting the return of Tippoo under the walls of Bangalore. Their private motives for desiring a meeting the reader is acquainted with; to the public the visit of the Begum had only the appearance of an act of deference frequently paid by inferior and subordinate princes to patrons whom they depend upon.

In this novel the dangerous alliance of Tippoo with Madame Montreville does not lead to the actual rebellion of the former against his father, Hyder Ali. The whole idea of this European lady commanding Mohammedan soldiers, led by a supposed renegade like Middlemas, seems Scott's invention throughout. In the ensuing dramatic scene Hartley's conduct and position are alike heroic and dangerous.

Scott for the only time in all his novels now describes an eventful Indian scene. Although his picturesque style is nearly as pleasant and powerful as in his British and French descriptions, it must have been founded altogether on information derived from Indian history and Indian travellers, unaided by any personal experience :

The meeting between persons of importance, more especially of royal rank, is a matter of very great consequence in India, and generally much address is employed to induce the person receiving the visit to come as far as possible to meet the visitor. . . . But Tippoo's impatience to possess the fair European

induced him to grant on this occasion a much greater degree of courtesy than the Begum had dared to expect. He appointed his garden adjacent to the city walls as the place of their meeting; the hour noon on the day succeeding his arrival. . . . Long before the appointed hour the rendezvous of Fakirs, beggars and idlers before the gate of the palace intimated the excited expectations of those who usually attend processions. . . .

At noon precisely a discharge of cannon placed in the outer courts, as also of matchlocks and of small swivels, carried by camels (the poor animals shaking their long ears at every discharge), announced that Tippoo had mounted his elephant. The solemn and deep sound of the naggra, or state drum, borne upon an elephant, was then heard like the distant discharge of artillery. . . .

Immediately before the Prince came, on a small elephant, a hard-faced, severe-looking man, by office the distributer of alms, which he flung in showers of small copper money among the Fakirs and beggars, whose scrambles to collect them seemed to augment their amount, while the grim-looking agent of Mohammedan charity, together with his elephant, which marched with half angry eyes and its trunk curled upwards, seemed both alike ready to chastise those whom poverty should render too importunate.

Tippoo himself next appeared richly apparelled and seated on an elephant which, carrying its head above all the others in the procession, seemed proudly

conscious of superior dignity. . . . Behind Tippoo came the various courtiers and officers of the household, mounted chiefly on elephants, all arrayed in their most splendid attire and exhibiting the greatest pomp. . . .

This splendid procession, having entered the royal gardens, approached through a long avenue of lofty trees a chabootra, or platform of white marble, canopied by arches of the same material. . . . In the centre of the platform was the musnud, or state cushion, of the Prince, six feet square, composed of crimson velvet, richly embroidered. By special grace a small low cushion was placed on the right of the Prince for the occupation of the Begum. In front of this platform was a square tank, four feet deep and filled to the brim with water as clear as crystal, having a large jet or fountain in the middle, which threw up a column of it to the height of twenty feet.

The Prince Tippoo had scarcely dismounted from his elephant and occupied the musnud, or throne of cushions, when the stately form of the Begum was seen advancing to the place of rendezvous. The elephant being left at the gate of the gardens opening into the country, opposite to that by which the procession of Tippoo had entered, she was carried in an open litter, richly ornamented with silver, and borne on the shoulders of six black slaves. Her person was as richly attired as silks and gems could accomplish. Richard Middlemas, as the Begum's General or Bukshee,

walked nearest to her litter in a dress as magnificent in itself as it was remote from all European costume, being that of a Banka, or Indian courtier.

The baseness of this wretch seems so hateful to Scott's mind, that he attributes to him a vague, risky scheme of finally rescuing Menie Gray, but up to this moment he, allied with the vindictive Begum, is on the very point of delivering up his deceived lover to the Indian Prince. The character and conduct of Middlemas, however, seem to some extent founded on fact,[1] while Madame Montreville seems a terrible compound of European cunning and intelligence with Indian ferocity, and is apparently altogether the novelist's invention. Her extraordinary position in India, and her strange alliance with Tippoo, seem also quite the novelist's fancy.

Scott, in describing the feelings of Middlemas at this terrible moment of his life, writes :

. . . What thoughts he had under this gay attire and the bold bearing which corresponded to it, it

[1] See Introduction to "The Surgeon's Daughter."

would be fearful to unfold. His least detestable hopes were perhaps those which tended to save Menie Gray by betraying the Prince who was about to confide in him, and the Begum, at whose intercession Tippoo's confidence was to be reposed.

The litter stopped as it approached the tank, on the opposite side of which the Prince was seated. Middlemas assisted the Begum to descend and led her, deeply veiled with silver muslin, towards the platform of marble. . . . When Tippoo Sahib discerned the splendid train of the Begum advancing, he arose from his musnud, so as to receive her near the foot of his throne and exchange greetings with her upon the pleasure of meeting and inquiries after their mutual health.

This extraordinary scene seems altogether owing to Scott's grand imagination, and could hardly have occurred in real life. The conduct and position of the European Madame Montreville, surrounded by Indian Mohammedans and unsupported by any European Government, if not an impossibility, seem not confirmed by any historical record. But the utter contrast between the young Scottish lovers, the rejected Hartley and the accepted Middlemas, the noble devotion of the former and the almost

incredible baseness of the latter, evidently incline Scott to describe them with steady fidelity throughout, as he proceeds:

. . . It would be impossible to describe the feelings with which Hartley recognised the apostate Middlemas and the Amazonian Mrs. Montreville. The sight of them worked up his resolution to make an appeal against them, in full Durbar, to the justice which Tippoo was obliged to render to all who should complain of injuries. In the meanwhile the Prince, who had hitherto spoken in a low voice, acknowledging, it is to be supposed, the services and the fidelity of the Begum, now gave the sign to his attendant, who said in an elevated tone: "Wherefore, and to requite these services, the mighty Prince, at the request of the mighty Begum Mootee Mohul, beautiful as the moon and wise as the daughter of Giamschid, had decreed to take into his service the Bukshee of her armies, and to invest him, as one worthy of all confidence, with the keeping of his beloved capital of Bangalore."

The voice of the crier had scarcely ceased, when it was answered by one as loud, which sounded from the crowd of bystanders: "Cursed is he who maketh the robber Leik his treasurer, or trusteth the lives of Moslemah to the command of an apostate!"

With unutterable satisfaction, yet with trembling

doubt and anxiety, Hartley traced the speech to the elder Fakir, the companion of Barak. Tippoo seemed not to notice the interruption, which passed for that of some mad devotee, to whom the Moslem princes permit great freedoms. The Durbar, therefore, recovered from their surprise, and, in answer to the proclamation, united in the shout of applause which is expected to attend every annunciation of the royal pleasure.

Their acclamation had no sooner ceased than Middlemas arose, bent himself before the musnud, and in a set speech declared his unworthiness of such high honour as had been conferred, and his zeal for the Prince's service. Something remained to be added, but his speech faltered, his limbs shook, and his tongue seemed to refuse its office.

Scott, in thus describing Middlemas's distress of mind amid his apparent triumph, evidently indicates that this treacherous villain still has some idea of rescuing his deceived victim, even at the last moment. Yet his chances of doing so were slight indeed. In the cunning, jealous Begum this artful man had evidently encountered more than his match, and feels unable to oppose her malignant purpose. Scott proceeds :

The Begum started from her seat, though contrary to etiquette, and said, as if to supply the deficiency in the speech of her officer: "My slave would say that in acknowledgment of so great an honour conferred on my Bukshee, I am so void of means, that I can only pray your Highness will deign to accept a lily from Frangistan, to plant within the recesses of the secret garden of thy pleasures. Let my lord's guards carry yonder litter to the Zenana."

A female scream was heard as, at a signal from Tippoo, the guards of his seraglio advanced to receive the closed litter from the attendants of the Begum.

At this terrible moment Scott introduces the unexpected rescue, as if this scene was on the stage of a theatre during an apparent tragedy.

. . . The voice of the old Fakir was heard louder and sterner than before: "Cursed is the Prince who barters justice for lust! He shall die in the gate by the sword of the stranger."

Here the novelist makes the Fakir prophesy historic truth, as Tippoo was fated to be slain

by the British, though by a shot and not by a sword, at the gate of his capital Seringapatam, while bravely striving to defend it.[1] But at this moment Tippoo, in apparent power, exclaims, exasperated at the old Fakir, and never suspecting who he is:

"This is too insolent. Drag forward that Fakir and cut his robe into tatters on his back with your chabouks."[2]

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[1] The true account of Tippoo's death is thus given in a "Life of Hyder Ali and of Tippoo Sahib," presented in 1859 by the late Prince Gholam Mohammed, son of Tippoo, to the present writer. After being wounded, "the fallen Sultan was immediately raised by some of his faithful adherents and placed upon his palanquin under the arch in one of the recesses of the gateway. . . . After a short interval some European soldiers entered the gateway, and one of them attempting to take off the Sultan's sword-belt, the wounded Prince, who still held his sword in his right hand, made a cut at the soldier and wounded him about the knee, when the latter instantaneously fired his musket and shot him through the temple, which caused immediate death. Thus fell the haughty and ambitious Sultan."

[2] Long whips.

Scott now describes a scene which is indeed a relief to his readers, and would probably present great dramatic power if produced on the stage. In reply to Tippoo's savage order:

All who attempted to obey the command of the incensed despot fell back from the Fakir as they would from the Angel of Death. He flung his cap and fictitious beard on the ground, and the incensed countenance of Tippoo was subdued in an instant when he encountered the stern and awful eye of his father. A sign dismissed him from the throne, which Hyder himself ascended, while the officious menials hastened to disrobe him of his tattered cloak and flung on him a robe of regal splendour, and placed on his head a jewelled turban. The Durbar rung with acclamations to Hyder Ali Khan Behauder, "the good, the wise, the discoverer of hidden things, who cometh into the Divan like the sun bursting from the clouds."

This sudden transformation Scott describes, of the disguised unknown Fakir into the almost despotic prince, may have occurred perhaps in some Oriental lands, but the

novelist does not mention this special case as historical, merely introducing it in the free management of his own story. He continues in his interesting description of the rescuing and in this instance noble prince:

. . . He looked majestically around him, and at length bent his look upon Tippoo, whose downcast eyes, as he stood before the throne with his arms folded on his bosom, were strongly contrasted with the haughty air of authority which he had worn but a moment before. "Thou hast been willing," the Nawaub said, "to barter the safety of thy capital for the possession of a white slave."

Scott here makes the Mohammedan ruler, Hyder Ali, in partly excusing his son, quote the Old Testament with the almost implicit faith which many of his religion show in common with Jews and Christians:

"But the beauty of a fair woman caused Solomon ben David to stumble in his path; how much more, then, should the son of Hyder Naig remain firm under temptation! That men may see clearly we must remove the light which dazzles them. Yonder Feringi woman must be placed at my disposal."

"To hear is to obey," replied Tippoo, while the deep gloom on his brow showed what his forced submission cost his proud and passionate spirit. . . . The feelings of the Begum were hidden under her veil, while, in spite of a bold attempt to conceal his alarm, the perspiration stood in large drops on the brow of Richard Middlemas. The next words of the Nawaub sounded like music in the ears of Hartley.

"Carry the Feringi woman to the tent of the Sirdar Belash Cassim" (the chief to whom Hartley had been committed). "Let her be tended in all honour. . . . For thee, Tippoo, I am not come hither to deprive thee of authority or to disgrace thee before the Durbar. Such things as thou hast promised to this Feringi, proceed to make them good. The sun calleth not back the splendour which he lends to the moon, and the father obscures not the dignity which he has conferred on the son. What thou hast promised, that do thou proceed to make good."

Scott then describes at length Prince Tippoo investing Middlemas with the government of Bangalore:

. . . A horse was led forward as the Prince's gift. It was a fine steed, high-crested, with broad hindquarters; he was of a white colour, but had

the extremity of his tail and mane stained red. . . . The horse was shown to the applauding courtiers and withdrawn in order to be led in state through the streets, while the new Killedar (Middlemas) should follow on the elephant, another present usual on such occasions, which was next made to advance, that the world might admire the munificence of the Prince.

Scott's prose description here of this wonderful animal may well be compared to Macaulay's poetical one when predicting the employment of elephants by the Greeks against the armies of Rome.[1] Scott's account was likely derived from informants, and not by any personal knowledge.

The huge animal approached the platform, shaking his large, wrinkled head, which he raised and

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[1] "The Greek shall come against thee,
The conqueror of the East.
Beside him stalks to battle
The huge earth-shaking beast;
The beast on whom the castle
With all its guards doth stand;
The beast who hath between his eyes
The serpent for a hand."
—Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome."

sunk as if impatient, and curling upwards his trunk from time to time as if to show the gulf of his tongueless mouth. Gracefully retiring with the deepest obeisance, the Killedar, well pleased the audience was finished, stood by the neck of the elephant, expecting the conductor of the animal would make him kneel down that he might ascend the gilded howdah which awaited his occupancy.

"Hold, Feringi," said Hyder. "Thou hast received all that was promised thee by the bounty of Tippoo. Accept now what is the fruit of the justice of Hyder."

As he spoke he signed with his finger, and the driver of the elephant instantly conveyed to the animal the pleasure of the Nawaub. Curling his long trunk around the neck of the ill-fated European, the monster suddenly threw the wretch prostrate before him and, stamping his huge, shapeless foot upon his breast, put an end at once to his life and to his crimes. The cry which the victim uttered was mimicked by the roar of the monster and a sound like an hysterical laugh mingling with a scream which rung from under the veil of the Begum. The elephant once more raised his trunk aloft and gaped fearfully.

The courtiers preserved a profound silence, but Tippoo, upon whose muslin robe a part of the victim's blood had spurted, held it up to the Nawaub, exclaiming in a sorrowful tone, "Father, father, was it thus my promise should have been kept?"

"Know, foolish boy," said Hyder Ali, "that the carrion which lies there was in a plot to deliver Bangalore up to the Feringis. . . . This Begum" (she started when she heard herself named) "has given us warning of the plot, and has so merited her pardon for having originally concurred in it —whether altogether out of love to us we will not too curiously inquire. Hence with that lump of bloody clay, and let the Hakim Hartley come before me."

"Hakim," said Hyder, "thou shalt return with the Feringi woman and with gold to compensate her injuries, wherein the Begum, as is fitting, shall contribute a share. Do thou say to thy nation, Hyder Ali acts justly." [1]

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[1] The following account of this Prince appears in his "Life," "revised and corrected by his grandson, the late Prince Gholam Mohammed": "He (Hyder Ali) administered justice with impartiality, and gave great encouragement to agriculture and to commerce. He was indulgent to his subjects, but strict in the discipline of his army, severe in punishing offenders, and cruel to his enemies. . . . He did not like great talkers; the subject of conversation in his assemblies was generally relative to the order and regulation of kingdoms and empires or to swords, muskets, jewels, horses, elephants, or invigorating medicines. His understanding was wonderful. . . . He was the enemy of the indolent and luxurious, and the backs of his

With these acts of combined justice and generosity on the part of Hyder Ali, Scott ends this story. The rescued heroine, Menie Gray, returns to Europe, but with health shattered by the terrible trials of her life, and she never marries. The wicked Begum's fate is thus merely indicated:

Her forts and governments were taken into Hyder's custody, and report said that her power being abolished and her consequence lost, she died by poison, either taken by herself or administered by some other person.

Hartley, the noble young hero of this story, dies

a victim to his professional courage in withstanding the progress of a contagious distemper, which he at length caught and under which he sunk.

Menie's subsequent life Scott thus simply and beautifully describes:

negligent and extortionate subjects were frequently softened by stripes of the whip."—"Life of Hyder Ali," p. 259.

She returned to Britain, and settling in her native village, appeared to find her only pleasure in acts of benevolence, which seemed to exceed the extent of her fortune, had not her very retired life been taken into consideration.

This story, though partly founded on fact—as stated in the Preface—introduces the Indian princes Hyder and Tippoo according to Scott's fancy. There is no wit or merriment in it from beginning to end. Unlike nearly all Scott's novels, there are no comic scenes or characters. All is grave, sombre, and tragic, with occasional brilliant, picturesque descriptions of Indian places and ceremonies. Yet enough of Scott's genius is indicated in this short, singular novel to show what a splendid romance about India he could have given to the world had he ever visited that interesting and extraordinary country — one, indeed, which now seems destined to become more and more connected with European affairs and politics.

In this pathetic novel Scott introduces few Indian characters—the Mohammedan princes Hyder Ali and Tippoo, Hartley's friend Barak,

and only one Hindoo, the crafty Paupiah. Thus

the glorious and unbounded subjects [1]

of Indian history and character which Scott avowedly likes and admires he yet avoids fully describing, for the excellent reason he states, of knowing

nothing at all about them.[2]

He therefore wisely devoted his chief energies to the subjects of British and occasionally French history and characters, about which his admirable novels have surely never been surpassed or even equalled both for their historic interest and moral value.

[1] Preface to "The Surgeon's Daughter."
[2] *Ibid.*

CONCLUDING REMARKS

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUDING REMARKS

IT is remarkable that Scott in all his novels, even in those relating to British history, never introduces Irish characters or incidents. This is to be sincerely regretted, as Ireland has been so often misrepresented even by honest writers, through political or religious prejudices, that Scott's views and opinions about it would have been equally valuable and interesting.

From a comparison of the different heroes of these novels, Scott apparently prefers the British character to any other. While introducing Frenchmen, Jews, Saracens, and gipsies, his heroes are usually brave, intelligent young English or Scottish men, rarely enthusiastic, and generally of very moderate views in both politics and religion.

Waverley, Bertram, Morton, Ravenswood, Osbaldistone, Tressilian, Nigel, and Everard alike possess much the same steady good sense and freedom from prejudice which are so generally found in the British character.

One important characteristic in some of the novels is the remarkable familiarity and sympathy between the higher and lower classes, masters and servants, mistresses and maids, landlords and tenants. This is especially noticeable in "The Antiquary," "Guy Mannering," and "The Heart of Midlothian." Yet this familiarity is certainly far from the kind that is said to "breed contempt," being the natural and proper sympathy between classes and persons depending on each other for their mutual comfort and advantage. Such has always been the feeling with which prudent governments and legislators have wished these classes to view each other, and to thus avoid tyranny on the one side and sycophancy on the other. The strong objections which some people feel against all novels and romances, as likely to distract and unfit the mind for its inevitable conflict with the realities

of life, may be urged with plausibility, if not truth, against some novels which indeed charm the imagination, yet may leave their readers less wise and more bewildered by their fanciful representations than before perusal. But such objections can never be maintained, and indeed have been seldom urged, against the instructive works of Sir Walter Scott.

Another remarkable feature in these novels is that, while Scott firmly condemns bigotry and prejudice, he is so completely free from both himself that he often describes people who, though bigoted and prejudiced, are yet estimable and sensible at the same time in many respects. For a man to thus respect and to some extent vindicate the motives of opponents is a decisive proof of thorough honesty and calm wisdom. Scott well knew that some prejudiced, unreasonable men, whose stern bigotry induced them to commit or sanction cruelty, by no means deserved the personal detestation which apparently their conduct merited. He carefully considers the circumstances in which they were placed, the opportunities they had of knowing better, and he

no less carefully examines and estimates the secret motives by which they were actuated.

Of all Scott's novels, "Old Mortality" is perhaps the most valuable from a historical point of view. In this story there are two rival heroes, Lord Evandale and Henry Morton, opposing each other in politics as well as in love. Each saves the other's life and each is blamed for doing so by their respective leaders, Claverhouse and Balfour of Burley, who resemble each other in the most relentless intolerance.

Some able writers can hardly describe religious bigotry or political prejudices without revealing a tincture of the same feelings themselves; they are naturally and reasonably indignant at the evils which these errors have caused, and seldom make sufficient allowance for those who have been influenced by them. Hence the historical student is often perplexed and astonished to find people so apparently inconsistent—enlightened, wise, and merciful, and yet capable of both stupid bigotry and relentless cruelty. Scott, especially in the historical novels, explains such inconsistency with remarkable clear-

ness. He usually makes his heroes intelligent young men, generally as enlightened as himself, while surrounding them with friends and enemies, whose religious or political fanaticism he then contrasts with the good sense and just views of the imaginary heroes. The opinions and even actions of such fanatics are indeed often odious and wicked, yet there may be something to admire in many of these men. But it is by the agency of their political or religious intolerance that so much misery and suffering have been entailed on mankind, especially in mediæval or in comparatively modern history. The crimes of the thoroughly unscrupulous, destitute of all principle or right feeling, have hardly caused the same amount of evil as the relentless fanaticism of religious or political enthusiasts, as ready to endure as to inflict persecuting cruelty, yet whose sincerity, when allied with courage and ability, is sure to command influence and respect among many people, as history proves.

To examine and explain the conduct of such persons was evidently one of the chief objects

of Scott's novels, to which he steadily devoted the great powers of his philosophical mind, with a success now generally acknowledged by an educated and enlightened posterity.

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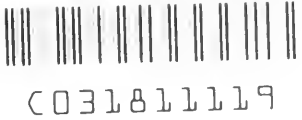
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